

TOWARD A THEORY AND A PLACE FOR THE ARTS AND  
THE HUMANITIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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"The dreamer must  
persist in communicating  
his ideas to men of  
power who determine the  
destiny of others."

Kenneth Clark

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## PREFACE

Most students complete their schooling with very little fine arts education and with no opportunity for exposure to works of professional artists. It is just as true that most students complete their public schooling with little or no in-depth consideration of ethical and philosophical questions or questions of human values.

A survey of public schools in Georgia and South Carolina would reveal that many elementary, junior, and senior high schools have programs in arts and crafts of varying degrees of quality. Some junior and senior high schools have worthy programs in choral music. A few high schools have drama departments--drama "clubs" really--that stage one low-grade comedy per year. Atlanta's Northside High School for the Performing Arts, a mini school within the larger school, is an exception, with a good program in drama incorporating music, dance, and art. There are no public schools in South Carolina or Georgia with serious programs in dance, the oldest of all art forms. Ethical and philosophical education is unheard of, unless some enterprising teacher incorporates such teachings in his plans.

Georgia and South Carolina, it may be said, make no serious concerted efforts in the instruction of the arts and humanities. In this they are an all too accurate microcosm of the general state of arts' and humanities'

offerings in American public schools. And it is a commonly accepted truth that public education and society are inextricably intertwined, that the schools reflect the priorities and values of society.

Such widespread lack of concern for and ignorance of artistic/humanistic values create a barren landscape where, if these sensitive, quality oriented values are considered at all, they are dismissed as of no practical use and thus not worthy of serious study or development. It is not surprising then that one searches in vain for thoughtfully conceived programs of arts and humanities for the public schools.

This dissertation is dedicated to that void and to Kenneth Clark's proposition that "the dreamer must persist in communicating his ideas to men of power who determine the destiny of others."

I am indebted to several people for their contributions to the completion of this work. My advisor, Dr. Barbara Jackson's prodding and pushing and her intellectual support were invaluable in causing me not to quit. In the process, she helped me authenticate my ideas and unashamedly value my roots. Thanks also to the others on my committee--Doctors Carnal, Kilpatrick, and Frick--who afforded guidance, criticism, and support. My appreciation to Miss Rosmaree Foster who typed the original manuscript out of numerous cross-outs and additions while following an intricate network of arrows. Thanks also to Miss Annette Mizzell for proof-reading it and for assisting in the research.

Certainly, this work may never have been completed without the sacrifice and tolerance of my wife Doris and children, Kim and Chineta. Finally, Atlanta University for affording me the place, and the Ford Foundation for affording me the time to do this work, deserve my acknowledgment of help.

C.A.S.

## The Predication and the Problem

This dissertation is predicated on the belief that there is not and has not been a widely understood or accepted way of thinking about the arts and humanities either separately or together so that their influence in the public school curriculum and in students' lives matches their inherent potential and worth. This lack of a valid view, of an organizing principle or sound theory has served to inhibit artistic and humanistic values from being appreciated by school administrators, from being infused in the public schools, and from flowing into the wider American society. So, a vacuum exists in the minds and spirits of school administrators, in the public school curriculum, in the psyches and practical lives of school clients and in American life.

Arts and humanities values, easily congruent with democratic principles of free people thinking and acting freely and responsibly, have been curtailed by economic and political sanctions and often by the witting and unwitting cooperation of artists and humanists themselves.

## Purpose and Significance of Study

As its title suggests the purpose of this study is to move (in both thinking and planning) toward a coherent theory, and toward a place for the arts and humanities in the public schools. This thinking toward a useful view of arts and humanities is done in this study by setting forth meaningful definitions of arts and humanities, by comparing them with other more "important" human endeavors, and by considering and attempting to pull together concepts and trends germane to the topic under investigation.

The significance of this work lies in the nature of the attempt itself--its breadth and depth, its wholestic, macro approach; in the questions it provokes



and probes. It is of significance also that it insists upon, advocates, and tries to establish a vital interconnection between the arts and humanities--to show how they complement, check, and serve each other and humankind. More specifically, the purpose and scope of this dissertation is to: (1) Define the arts and humanities as a viable school program. (2) Delineate a theoretical base for their combined inclusion in the public school curriculum. (3) Suggest approaches to structuring, implementing, and administering such a program.

The questions this research attempts to answer may be stated as follows:

(1) What are some important considerations leading to a reasonably sound theory out of which an arts and humanities program may grow? (2) Does a combined and coordinated arts and humanities program have a place in the public school program? (3) If so, how may it be initiated?

In arguing for a prominent place for the arts and humanities, the study assumes that: (1) The arts and humanities offer perhaps the best way to introduce or increase the presence of humane values in society. (2) Society needs artistic and humane values. (3) Schools have a stake in making people more artistic in outlook and more humane in behavior. (4) The public school system is a good vehicle for the introduction of artistic and humane values into society.

In sum, this dissertation approaches a theory of the arts and humanities for public education and suggests an orientation to that end. And it mentions some possible ways to approach the implementation of the envisioned program, while pointing out its broader social implications.

## Recommendations and Conclusions

Recognizing the unlikelihood of the development of a neat and complete theory (as ideas challenging the nobler side of people seldom are neat and complete), the study concludes with several suggestions as to how the envisioned program may be approached while a coherent theory is being forged. The first suggestion is that proper consideration be given to the envisioned program's feasibility in terms of funding and local resources of talent and expertise. The generation of these is recommended if they do not appear to be readily available. A second consideration should be the ethnicity and other unique features of the community where the program is to be initiated. There should be enough diversification built in to accommodate various publics. Third, much thought should be given to educating the community to a broader concept of the arts and humanities. Fourth, timeliness should be considered. There is a time to push for such a program and a time when energy would be better used planning and not pushing. Also, the school system that undertakes a coordinated program as suggested here should establish a good working relationship with local businesses and institutions of higher learning and with local, state, and national arts and humanities organizations. This assures help in developing materials, conducting workshops and in identifying and training personnel. This is also a way to enlist the support of important groups that could, by apathy or action, undermine the program at its inception.

A final recommendation made in the dissertation is that great care be taken to select the right people to carry out the program. The best people would not be just good artists, committed humanists and effective teachers--but in addition to having a high degree of these characteristics--they must hold a point of view concerning the arts and humanities commensurate with ideas expressed in this dissertation.

Also, seeing a similarity in the way women, blacks, artists, and humanists perceive and are perceived and treated, this study recommends the incorporation of the very values and insights these groups tend to hold. It sees a black perspective as symbolic of these values and views, and recommends this perspective and a forthright consideration of the divisive issue of race for one who would think toward a theory of arts and humanities in the public school. Finally, this dissertation is in the tradition of the dreamer, believing with Kenneth Clark that, "the dreamer must persist in communicating his ideas to men of power who determine the destiny of others."

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of Problem

Public School systems, despite their noble objective of educating all the people, remain rigid, narrow, and nervous affairs, ineffective in any positive way for many of their clients. This is partly because education is so narrowly defined and practiced as to be far less rewarding to teachers, students, and to society than it might be. Proceeding from an assumption that is half valid at best--that knowledge is external, standardized, and fixed--public education is narrow and rigid in at least three respects:

- (1) Its organizational structure
- (2) Its real (or practiced) philosophy, and
- (3) In terms of the contents selected for the processing of its clients.

#### Organizational Structure

Public school systems are organized upon a typical and time-tested bureaucratic model of hierarchical levels. Each level is responsible to the next ascending level, or to certain officials in that level, with the highest (policy-making) levels (boards of education, state departments of education, and federal agencies of education) being responsible to the people, finally. Thus, parents are responsible to and for their children, who are responsible

to their teachers, who are responsible to principals; principals to superintendents; superintendents to local boards of education who, in addition to satisfying a local constituency, follow and enforce the policies of state departments of education. State departments of education are theoretically and ultimately responsible to the citizens (parents) of the state or to the governor, who must answer to a state constituency.

To their credit, it could be said that the bureaucratic features of school systems organization make for efficient administration; and, the circular nature of their organization (the fact that schools must be accountable to their clients and constituencies) is in keeping with the democratic ideal that those governing must have the consent of the governed. The parallel is, of course, that those who run the public schools must be acceptable to those for whom they are run.

However, despite these commendable features, schools, in their daily operation are organized around rigid schedules, usually from 8-3:30, with the time between chopped into hour or less periods marked off by bells. Flexible scheduling and open classrooms may have relieved some of this rigidity. Still, it is the rule, not the exception that most school systems are characterized by tight standardized requirements of so many minutes for this and so many minutes for that. State departments of education, accrediting agencies, and government agencies, although serving valuable functions in upgrading and equalizing education, often reinforce and perpetuate rigidity in public school organization.

### Practiced Philosophy

Although public schools espouse a noble philosophy of giving all an equal opportunity to learn, as they should, it is their "practiced" philosophy that contributes to their being accurately characterized as narrow, nervous affairs. In addition to the rigid daily schedule on which they operate, certain ideas are practiced that render the reaching of the schools' noble goals all but impossible. For instance, at the building level, there is the idea that the principal is responsible for everything that goes on in his building. Granted, this is a sound legal concept that places the final responsibility where it belongs, on the shoulders of the leader. But as interpreted and practiced by many principals, it may have caused more emphasis to be placed on standardization and control than on autonomy and creativity; on simplistic yes or no answers, than on searching questions that may turn up more questions. An environment stressing control produces a certain kind of legalistic and mechanical discipline—which is not all bad—but which has little to do with learning in the classic, scientific or artistic sense. Nor does such an environment contribute much to the pressing humanistic needs of education and society, or effectively lead us toward what Leo Tolstoy calls "the highest aim of human life: uniting different people in one common feeling, destroying separation, educating people for union in hopes that the reign of force will someday be replaced by the kingdom of God—of peace, love, pity and truth."<sup>1</sup>

In their practiced philosophy, schools have remained true to Benjamin Franklin's stern and narrow view of the tenor and task of American public

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<sup>1</sup>Leo N. Tolstoy, What is Art? (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1960), p. 24.

education. Said Franklin, "To America, one school master is worth a dozen poets; and the invention of a machine is of more importance than a masterpiece of Raphael."<sup>1</sup>

### The Curriculum: The Contents Selected For Processing Clients

If the organizational structure of public school systems is overly rigid and the practiced philosophy is narrow and constraining, the content, it would appear, has to fall in line just as a malleable substance takes on and becomes hardened in the shape of its mold. Public school curriculum, although a smorgasbord of offerings, is still involved more with the accumulation and memorization of facts and information than with the skills of thinking. The "college bound, academic curriculum" is its mainstay. It does not make a substantive contribution to those who will not be going to college or to the "dreamer" who would exercise his imagination, originality of thought and powers of expression or is moved by ethical, moral questions, such as--how better societies may be built.

A person with these latter talents and interests can find support only at the periphery of the curriculum, if at all. It is primarily this population that will be the focus of this dissertation. However, concomitant benefits should accrue to other students, those who do not necessarily have artistic and humanistic leanings. As a result of being in an environment rich with artistic/humanistic inputs, they should become better listeners--more attentive to, and more discriminating and critical in their reception or rejection of, messages and ideas. They should improve in their ability to make aesthetic

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<sup>1</sup>Rick George, interview held on "The Arts in Education," Cultural Affairs Programs, Greenville E. T. V., March 1976.

judgments and become more constructively attuned to big social and ecological problems. In addition, they should benefit from the sheer enjoyment and appreciation of presentations in drama, dance, music, photography.

And they will stand a better chance of becoming genuinely "finer" people, seekers of excellence, and capable of dignified and fulfilling relations with others.

The problem simply stated is that, due in part to the public schools' organizational structure, to its practiced philosophy and to its curriculum, literally hordes of people go in at the first grade and come out at the twelfth (or drop out before reaching that magic mark) without being touched positively by their school experience to an extent commensurate with their capabilities. It must be added in the interest of approaching a full statement of the problem that in making little or no serious concession to divergent thinking, to imagination, to originality of thought, to the powers of expression, and to a searching study of ethical, moral questions, the public school curriculum reflects the environment of which it is a part.

So, the vacuum in the public school is a microcosm of an emptiness in American Society. Hence, this dissertation moves toward and proposes the formulation of a theory and a place for the arts and humanities in public education that will have implications for society. The theory aimed at is based on the belief that it is the content, methodology, and habits of mind of the artist and humanist (and of an arts and humanities curriculum) that will best fill the emptiness. That I believe the emptiness in American life is essentially a spiritual one—one that will not yield to old or new technologies, structures, and methodologies alone, or to an impressive array of statistical data—is no less a reason why I propose to search for a theory of and define



a place for the arts and humanities in the public schools and to suggest a plan for the implementation of such a program.

The significance of formulating a theory of arts and humanities, and of suggesting some possible approaches as to how they may be implemented within the public schools can be supported on at least two grounds:

- (1) The need to revitalize and reform the public school curriculum,
- (2) The need to improve the quality of life and the survival chances of human life in the larger social system--nation and world.

Revitalizing and reforming the mainly sterile and often stultifying public school curriculum remains high on the agenda of public education if it is to merit and maintain public support. The need for a creative breath of air can be seen in most classrooms on the faces of bored junior and senior high school students and in the attitudes of disgruntled teachers who have lost the spark of inspiration so vital to the teaching art. It would be sheer fantasy to pretend that the kind of theory and curriculum innovation proposed would solve all or even most of the problems presently plaguing public education, but to echo John I. Goodlad, "It's worth a try."<sup>1</sup> It's worth a try if for no other reason than that a coordinated approach to the arts and humanities has never been tried before. Many schools have, and almost all try to have, well-established academic programs. Most schools have, or try to have, good and "winning" athletic programs; many have vocational programs; many have special education programs, compensatory programs, etc. But few, if any, public schools in America have good or even poor programs--coordinated or otherwise--in the arts and humanities.

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<sup>1</sup> John I. Goodlad, speech given at the ASCD Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 1975.

Does this suggest that practical-minded America places no value on "truth," "beauty," "justice," and "excellence"--on being human? Yet, "the primary function of education is," to quote Goodlad again, "to make people more fully human."

The need to improve the quality of our personal and social lives outside the walls of the school is possibly a prime criterion when considering the what and how of curriculum. And the quality imperative is naturally the forte of the artists and humanists, not the politician or the economist, whose strong suit is the ability to discern the popular will. Politicians and economists are more at home with gross power based on the manipulation of people and money. They ponder such questions as: How many votes, how much capital will turn on this or that issue? The artistic, humanistic perspective, on the other hand, asks: Is it good and excellent, right and fair? Is it beautiful and true? Does it contribute to happiness? Is it in tune with the ecological system? Should this or that technological innovation be mass-produced or produced at all just because it can be? It is the pondering of these kinds of questions that can possibly improve the quality of life in and out of school.

### Purpose

The purpose and scope of this dissertation is to: (1) Define the arts and humanities as a viable school program. (2) Delineate a theoretical base for their combined inclusion in the public school curriculum. (3) Suggest approaches to structuring, implementing, and administering such a program. The questions that this research will be attempting to answer may be stated as follows: (1) What are some important considerations leading to a reasonably

sound theory out of which an arts and humanities program may grow?

(2) Does a combined and coordinated arts and humanities program have a place in the public school program? (3) If so, how may it be initiated?

In arguing for a prominent place for the arts and humanities, it will be assumed that: (1) The arts and humanities offer perhaps the best way to increase the presence of humane values in society. (2) Schools have a stake in making people more artistic and humane. (3) The public school system is a good vehicle for making artistic and humane values in society more prevalent.

### Procedures and Methodology

This research will employ eclectic procedures and methodologies. It will use descriptive methods in logically defining the various categories of the arts and the humanities, making careful distinctions and connections between the broad categories (arts and humanities) and between the sub-categories within each. In its descriptive techniques, it will have considerable congruence with John W. Best's notion of the descriptive method. This method, he explains, attempts to

describe and interpret what is. It will be concerned with conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of view, or attitudes that are held; processes that are being felt; or trends that are developing.<sup>1</sup>

Using the methods of budget comparisons, published surveys, and interviews, it will consider the economic and political aspects of the arts and humanities in education and in society.

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<sup>1</sup>John W. Best, Research in Education 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 116.

Certainly the anthropological/sociological methods and procedures of the participant observer will be employed in delineating the problems and values inherent in and attached to the arts and humanities as they relate to public schools.

Library research will be conducted to get a useful view of the shape of past and present thinking in the area under investigation and to discern trends that appear to have future portents. This has been done in the review of related literature section and will be done in other sections of the study. Also, library research will serve as a "sounding board," a test or a critique of the accuracy, validity, substance, and balance of the ideas set forth here. Support for concepts and contentions advocated in this work will also, to a great extent, come from library research.

And finally, the procedures and methods of the artist and humanist will be used--direct observation, intuitive insight tempered by logical reasoning, and synthesis of wide reading and much thought from a background of involvement in artistic and humanistic pursuits. This dissertation will assume that the insights of theologians, novelists, essayists, poets, historians, and philosophers are no less valid and socially beneficial, although they were not arrived at through the methods of strict scientific reasoning.

#### Contribution to the World of Knowledge And to Administrative Practice

Laying part of the needed foundation leading toward the formulation of a coherent and feasible theory for a combined arts and humanities program in the public schools and society is the obvious and foremost contribution that this research hopes to make to the world of knowledge. It should contribute

to administrative practices by helping to re-define the arts and humanities in a way that is more acceptable to educational administrators, so that they may begin to:

- (1) See, or at least entertain the thought of, the arts and humanities as vital to the public school curriculum.
- (2) Abandon the false notion of arts for arts' or for the elite's sake, or of humanities mainly for fuzzy-minded moralists or "do-gooders."
- (3) Be less intimidated by creative people or by artistic and humanistic thrusts.
- (4) Become more concerned with lending discipline to inevitable change and lending guidance towards--even stimulating--positive change.
- (5) Become less concerned with authoritative control over school systems and more concerned with presiding over a genuine learning environment.

Finally, this dissertation should contribute to administrative practice by setting before school administrators a point of view regarding education and society to which they are seldom exposed. The school "administrative type" (and there is such a profile) generally has not had to seriously grapple with the thoughts that will be put forth in this study. He has not had to do this by the contingencies and requirements of his job or by political pressures from his community; nor has he done it by self study or formal training. And just as important, his personality and temperament, in most cases, would not incline him to such thinking for a sustained period of time. Hence, while addressing a missing dimension in public education, the ideas expressed here will also be filling a vacuum in the thinking of most school administrators.

This dissertation should find a niche in the thinking of those who see the interrelatedness of and tension between change (an arts thrust) and stability (a humanities thrust). The ideas set forth, however, will make no claim or effort to being futuristic in the more exotic and current sense of that word. The study will make no attempt to cut the moorings that tie us to the past or to dismantle the solid features characterizing the present structure of the public school establishment. Rather, its contribution to the world of knowledge will be in helping finally to fashion a district wide program for all public school students. The writer hopes this effort will lead to the ultimate rejection of certain assumptions and values and to the questioning, adjusting, and acceptance of others; and to a better understanding and accounting of ourselves--as administrators and educators, as societies, as nations, as world citizens and as appreciators of and participants in an infinite universe.

In sum, this dissertation will, in keeping with the purposes, approach a theory of the arts and humanities for public education and suggest an orientation to that end. And it will mention some possible ways to approach the implementation of the envisioned program, while pointing out the broader social implications of such a program.

**PART I. A THEORETICAL CONCEPT  
OF THE ARTS AND THE  
HUMANITIES FOR  
THE PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There is much current literature on the arts in education and on humanistic education stressing the need for the development of aesthetic sensibilities and for better human relations. This body of literature extols humane virtues and the human side of learning, gives credence to divergent thinking and the affective domain. Examples of works with this orientation are: Teaching as a Subversive Activity by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, Toward Humanistic Education: A Curriculum of Affect by Gerald Weinstein and Mario Fantini, Education and Ecstasy by George Leonard, and On Knowing by Jerome Bruner.\* Herbert Read's book, Education Through Art is one of the more definitive studies on the subject of arts in education. Using a quote from George Bernard Shaw, he writes on the title page: "I am simply calling attention to the fact that fine art is the only teacher except torture." Later, he writes that "the education of the aesthetic sensibility is of fundamental importance," although, he observes, "only rudimentary traces are found in the educational systems of the past, and only in a most haphazard and arbitrary fashion in the educational practices of the present day."<sup>1</sup> His concern is with the arts only, not the humanities.

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\*See Bibliography for bibliographic data on these books.

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Read, Education Through Art (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 7.



Maxwell Goldberg's book, Design in Liberal Learning, unlike Herbert Read's, emphasizes both the arts and humanities as disciplines of study and moves toward a theoretical framework for the arts and humanities in higher education. Learning for Tomorrow, a selection of articles and essays edited by Alvin Toffler of Future Shock\* fame, sets forth a theoretical basis for futuristic educational reform in a direction commensurate with, yet a little far out from, artistic and humanistic values.

The major strength of these efforts is their provocative arguments as to why and how the arts and humanities are essential to an educated person and to a civilized society and should be an important, even a central, feature of an educational system. Their major weakness, for the purposes of this study, is that they do not grapple sufficiently with the question of how a viable arts and humanities program built on a real cultural heritage can be thought about and addressed so as to merit the possibility of being formulated into a theory or of being implemented in a sound, sure, and pervasive way within the public school education system. Nor were they attempting such. They wrote to their purposes with varying degrees of effectiveness.

Paul Torrance, in advocating a broader definition of the gifted, has indirectly lent support to the importance of focusing upon freeing and disciplining or cultivating the creative possibilities in people. Torrance writes, "It is quite clear that if we establish a level on some single measure of giftedness, we eliminate many extremely gifted individuals on other measures of giftedness."<sup>1</sup> It is the assumption of this work that the arts

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\*See bibliography.

<sup>1</sup>E. Paul Torrance, Gifted Children in the Classroom (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965) p. 2.

and humanities lend themselves to the possibility of finding, freeing, and cultivating various and neglected kinds of giftedness. Apart from finding other linkages of the arts and the humanities with the gifted, a search of works on the arts and humanities vis-a-vis public education reveals books, articles and essays and numerous allusions and references to the importance of the arts and humanities to one's dignity and total development. They explain (or in the case of allusions and reference in books of other subjects, they "throw crumbs to") how and why the arts and humanities are essential elements in the making of an educated person.

This is not meant to suggest that such writings have no relevance or that they make no worthy contributions. It is reasonable to believe that these writings help make the American society more receptive to the arts and humanities. However, there appears to be little in the way of well thought out theories of coordinated and coherent arts and humanities programs for the public schools. Several examples of what has been written on the issue of arts and humanities as they relate to the public schools will be reviewed in the following pages.

Arts in Society, a journal whose title reflects its purposes of moving the arts to the center of society, focused its entire 1974 summer/fall issue on the topic of "The Arts in Education." It contains twelve full-length articles dealing with various aspects of the arts in education. The lead article, "The Carnegie Commission Looks at the Arts" was the commission's report on the place and orientation of the arts in higher education. The commission, chaired by Clark Kerr, reported that it studied the attitudes of a vast number of students.

We undertook the most major survey of student and faculty opinion ever undertaken in the United States or in any other country for that matter . . . covering 70,000 undergraduate students, 30,000 graduate students and 60,000 faculty members. Among other things, we were asking students what they missed on their campuses. Their greatest complaint was that American college campuses were not paying enough attention to their emotional growth. One of the great complaints, expressed by a majority of the students surveyed, was that the campuses did not have sufficient opportunities for expression of their creative interests.<sup>1</sup>

A survey of alumni and their reaction to their college experience, was that "they wished they had taken more work in the area of the humanities."<sup>2</sup>

Other articles in the journal dealt with the problems of colleges reaching out to surrounding communities via arts, federal supports for arts in education, and arts education for minorities. Three articles were aimed at public school teachers, offering insights and techniques of teaching an area of the arts or of teaching basic skills or advancing cognitive learning through the arts. One article, "We Speak for the Arts: Proposals for Education Issued by American Council for the Arts in Education," makes an impassioned plea for arts in education and in life:

It is high time, then, for those who know the power and versatility of the arts to rally their forces and plead once more the case for the arts in education and in life. That we must plead once more is as revealing as it is deplorable. Advocates of the three R's or the sciences are not required to file briefs or argue their case which, it would appear, is self-evident. But advocates of the Arts' central importance to education and life must forever argue and re-argue their case.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Clark Kerr, "The Carnegie Commission Looks at the Arts," Arts in Society 2 (Summer 1976): pp. 192-197

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Darragh Parks, "We Speak for the Arts: Proposals for Education Issued by the American Council for the arts in Education," Arts in Society 2 (Summer 1974): 223.

In line with the journal's long-standing purposes of moving the arts and humanities to the center of society, this issue of the Arts in Society makes a sound case for the arts centrality in education. There are insights and information here that may be drawn upon to approach a theory of the arts and humanities for that segment of the educational establishment to which this dissertation is addressed--public elementary and secondary education. Apart from such scholarly advocacy for the Arts as exemplified by Arts in Society, there has, of course, been much proselytizing by arts organizations for arts in education in the forms of pamphlets and brochures.

Literature appropriately related to this study with a humanities, as opposed to an arts, slant stresses the central importance and value of man--his hopes, fears, and meanings--and his relationships with other men. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) has produced an impressive body of literature along this line--impressive both in volume and in quality. Three examples of ASCD materials will be reviewed.

Humanizing Education: The Person in the Process is typical of ASCD Publications and of the person centeredness of these publications. The book is a compilation of addresses made during the ASCD's 22nd annual conference in Dallas, March 1967. Carl Rogers, Fred Wilhelms, Raymond W. Houghton and others all attest to the need of putting humanity and the humanities at the center of the curriculum. In reference to having reviewed a proposed curriculum for a vocational-technical school, John Letson, former superintendent of Atlanta public schools writes,

I recognized that in the formulation of the curriculum, there was little recognition of the humanities as deserving of a place in the curriculum. Our greatest challenge in the years immediately ahead is the urgent need to discover better ways of putting into effect an educational program that will help each individual pupil properly understand his heritage, properly understand who he is and how he can best fit into the scheme of things."<sup>1</sup>

Arthur Combs writes in the forward, "The goal of education must be self actualization, the production of persons willing and able to interact with the world in intelligent ways."<sup>2</sup>

Later in one of the most thought provoking addresses printed in the publication, Combs elaborates six things that educators need to do toward the end of humanizing education. Expressing incredulity about how successful we have been in eliminating meaning from our public schools, he states the following as one of the six things we need to do: "If the goals of humanism are to be obtained, personal meanings rather than facts must become the objective of teaching."<sup>3</sup> He says we must look carefully at our practices and weed out whatever has depersonalizing and alienating effects. He recalls a list of depersonalizing practices that were compiled by the 1972 ASCD Yearbook Committee:<sup>4</sup>

The emphasis on fact instead of feeling  
The belief that intelligence is fixed and immutable  
The continual emphasis upon grades, artificial reasons  
instead of real ones for learning  
Conformity and preoccupation with order and neatness  
Authority, support and evidence  
Solitary learning  
Cookbook approaches

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<sup>1</sup> John Letson, "Role of Foundations and Government in Humanizing Education," in Humanizing Education: The Person In The Process, ed. Robert R. Leeper (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1967). pp. 64-72.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Combs, "Foreward," Humanizing Education: The Person In the Process, ed. Robert R. Leeper (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1967).

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Combs, Humanizing Education: The Person in the Process, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

Emphasis on competition  
 Lockstep progression  
 Force threat and coercion  
 Wooden rules and regulations  
 The idea that if it's hard, it's good

This publication and this article in particular are important reminders to one attempting to think his way toward a school system wide theory and place for arts and humanities. The reminder is that the person must not be lost in the process.

The Humanities and the Curriculum is a compilation of papers from a conference sponsored by the ASCD Commission on Curriculum Development held in Chicago in December 1965, and titled, "The Role of the Humanities in Current Curriculum Development." The purpose of the conference, comprising participants from the public schools, universities and foundations, was to consider the contributions of certain disciplines to the humanities.

Berman, in the lead article, contends that Western Man has "neglected the study of the person as a total being," but has instead seen man as an "aggregate of parts rather than as a mystifying, complicated, unique, but integrated individual."<sup>1</sup> She credits "humanities courses as being among the rare attempts made by schools to reach the individual and to help him better understand himself and the wider community."<sup>2</sup> She lists six observable elements that currently characterize humanities programs in schools: (1) They are usually multidisciplinary and are not usually titled "humanities." (2) They are usually taught by several teachers. The music, art, literature, and history teachers comprise a team of humanities teachers.

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<sup>1</sup>Louise Berman, "The Humanities: The Present Scene and the Potential," The Humanities and the Curriculum, ed. Louise Berman (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1967). p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

- (3) Humanities courses are ordinarily found only at the secondary level.
- (4) Humanities courses are very often planned only for academically talented students.
- (5) Modes of evaluating a student's learning in the humanities program are not congruent with the stated objectives of the program.
- (6) Our knowledge about current programs in the humanities often grows out of analysis of written courses of study and subjective reports of teachers and administrators.<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Berman closes her article with some suggestions for those who would design humanities programs. She suggests among other things that one should: (1) search for and enhance those elements which are found in every course that increase our uniquely human functions; (2) proceed with the selection of content and methodology rather than getting stymied initially by the problem of scheduling; (3) give greater than usual attention to the perceptions of children. Finally, she emphasizes that, "All students, whether academically talented or lacking in academic prowess have the potential for increased understanding of themselves and others."<sup>2</sup>

There are papers on the relationship of social studies to the humanities, the contribution of fine arts and music to the humanities, and on the place of philosophy, logic, ethics and values in the curriculum. The writer, James Jordan, believes that elementary and secondary schools are right in not attempting to teach philosophy directly at those levels. He sees philosophy as properly and sufficiently infused in other courses. He writes, "Let literature and the arts flourish. Philosophy can wait. It has

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

its place in a curriculum, but its place, in my opinion, is after the years of the public school."<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Berman concludes this eighty-two page publication with an article titled "Toward a Sharper Focus on the Humanities." In it she gives further suggestions for planning humanities programs with her grand idea being that man must be studied in all of his complexity.

If man is studied in his simplicity, he is dehumanized, and many of the innuendos of his being which make for a rich, full life are lost. When man is viewed in his complexity, the totality of his humanness can be considered in planning school programs.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the positions taken in this book are sharply drawn and controversial. They should be seen as grist for thinking by one attempting to approach a coherent theory of arts and humanities in education. In general, the prospective theory builder or his theory should not deliberately "stir up" controversy; neither should he be intimidated by controversy or the likelihood of it.

To Nurture Humaneness: Commitment for the Seventies is the ASCD's 1970 yearbook. It contains the writings of scholars from diverse backgrounds, both in and out of the areas usually considered as the humanities. The 245 page volume is divided into four parts: Perceptions of Humanness and Humaneness, Revolutions Affecting the Nurturing of Humaneness, Inhibiting and Facilitating Forces in Nurturing Humaneness, and Educational Imperatives in Nurturing Humaneness. Each writer makes a good and often provocative case for a humanistic thrust in education. E. Paul

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<sup>1</sup>James A. Jordan, "The Place of Philosophy, Logic, Ethics, Values in the Curriculum," in The Humanities and the Curriculum, ed. Louise Berman (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1967), p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Louise Berman, "Toward a Sharper Focus on the Humanities," in The Humanities and the Curriculum, ed. Louise Berman (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1967), p. 81.



Torrance's twelve points on what it means to become human is worth reading to clarify one's thinking about the commitment to be human and humane. His criteria for becoming human, includes, among other things, a propensity toward curiosity and depth, a flexibility of views, and an understanding of nonverbal messages.<sup>1</sup>

In part three of the book Jean D. Grambs writes, "The child is educated by his society as well as by the school. The brand of his society is upon him the instant he appears, in the sterile world of the delivery room or in the squalor of a backwoods shack."<sup>2</sup> Using quotes from several social critics, including two anthropologists, Grambs makes a disturbing case for the school's inability, in the face of inhibiting forces, to effect positive social change. She writes:

school--education--in the context of today appears at the worst to be a production line of violent or alienated persons, or, at the least, an irrelevant factor in the processing of the coming generation.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, she sees little hope of the school building a new social order.

However, no matter how hopeless it appears, the imperative for nurturing humaneness in the schools is clearly stated by Arthur W. Combs, Bennetta Washington, Lavone A Hanna, Raymond W. Houghton, and Grace Graham. Graham writes:

Not only is it necessary that the school leader, whether teacher, administrator, or supervisor, become a model of humaneness in his acceptance of others, he has also to acquire skills and knowledge that

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<sup>1</sup>E. Paul Torrance, "What It Means To Become Human," in To Nurture Humaneness, ed. Mary-Margaret Scobey (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1970) pp. 3-10.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Dresden Grambs, "Forces Affecting American Education," in To Nurture Humaneness, ed. Mary-Margaret Scobey (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1970) p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 119.

help him encourage students to become fully functioning individuals. . . . He has to reject an authoritarian role and become a facilitator, a guide, a resource person. Only then will he be able to promote both the cognitive and affective development of his students.<sup>1</sup>

A search of Dissertation Abstracts International from July 1974 to July 1975 reveals six dissertations with apparent close pertinence to the issues under consideration in this dissertation. Dissertations taken to have close pertinence were those dealing with the arts and/or humanities under the heading of Education, Curriculum Development. There were other dissertations on certain aspects of the fine arts--analysis of a particular artists's work, of a particular period, of a period's origins and development or of the significance of a certain artistic innovation. Similarly there were treatments in the humanities of a given era, of a certain humanist or of the tracing of a concept germane to the humanities. These offer valuable insights to the arts and humanities student but are not closely enough related to the thrust of this work to merit a place in the review of related literature.

Of the six dissertations considered pertinent to this work, three were slanted predominantly or exclusively toward the arts and three toward the humanities. Those dealing with the arts will be considered first. The dissertations on arts in the curriculum were "An Individual Art Curriculum for the Elementary School" by Heather Kitzman, "Aesthetic Inquiry and the Creation of Meaning: A Program of Instruction in the Visual Arts for the Elementary School" by Bette Carleen Acuff, and the "Art Education Episode: A Viewpoint of Art Education for the Facilitation of the Art Experience" by James Joseph Srubek. Complete bibliographic data will be given as each dissertation is discussed separately.

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<sup>1</sup>Grace Graham, "Toward a Humane School," in To Nurture Humaneness, ed. Mary-Margaret Scobey (Washington: ASCD Publications, 1970), p. 241.

Ms. Kitzman writes that the purpose of her study "was to develop a multi-level individualized elementary art curriculum for the fifth grade."<sup>1</sup> She believes and suggests in her conclusion that her study, "confirms, very little attention is being directed by edupersons sic to the utilization of art curricular oriented to individual characteristics or concepts to individual instruction in the elementary school."<sup>2</sup> And she recommends an approach to the teaching of art that would foster learning through "the merging of conceptual, perceptual, and technical skill building while the student is experiencing art activities."<sup>3</sup> Her study focuses on one small aspect of teaching arts and crafts at the fifth grade level.

Bette Carleen Acuff's study "attempted to promote the development of aesthetic intelligence through a program of training for elementary school teachers and children."<sup>4</sup> Ms. Acuff had hypothesized that children trained in aesthetic inquiry (to describe, analyze, interpret and justify their aesthetic judgment) would be more perceptive in their descriptions and analysis, more imaginative in their aesthetic judgments. The study employed a research design involving individual interviews, preference questionnaires, control groups, the judgments of art historians and a two-way

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<sup>1</sup>Heather Hanlon Kitzman, "An Individual Art Curriculum for the Elementary School" (Ed. D. Dissertation, University of Oregon, 1974), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Bette Carleen Acuff, "Aesthetic Inquiry and the Creation of Meaning: A Program of Instruction in the Visual Arts for the Elementary School," (Ph. D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1974), p. 20.

analysis of variance. The hypotheses broken down into five specifics was only partially confirmed. Acuff concludes:

The program was effective in promoting more diverse and complex descriptions of paintings by fifth graders. It was less effective in promoting interpretive and judgmental abilities. Perceiving of relationships and articulating them is a complex cognitive skill dependent on the ability to differentiate and to synthesize. The complex of skills required in fully developed interpretive and judgmental behaviors<sup>1</sup> may be a function of a longer practice and cognitive maturation.

This study has insights and implications for teachers of art appreciation.

A broader or perhaps merely a speculative generalization on her findings may be that they tend to suggest that during their previous four years of school, the school may not have afforded the children inputs that would develop interpretive and judgmental powers. This should be a prime area of contemplation for one attempting a theory for the arts and humanities.

In his dissertation, Srubek attempts "to develop an alternative view of art education different from existing view points." He writes, "Offering an alternative viewpoint is not only intended to add to existing views of art education but to illustrate a process of developing a viewpoint for art education practice."<sup>2</sup> His method of development is inferential, with "certain premises about art and education interrelated by reasoning, implication and empirical evidence."<sup>3</sup> For his purposes,

Education is an on going process of integrating all forms of understanding into a unity, yielding personal meaning. Art is valid in education, mainly because it is a unique mode of<sup>4</sup> understanding, artistic understanding. Thus, art is an activity of education.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>James Joseph Srubek, "The Art Education Episode: A Viewpoint of Art Education for the Facilitation of the Art Experience," (Ph. D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1975), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Srubek disclaims any formula or guarantee for his art education episode, but proposes it as "an improvisational, art education project for particular individuals in whatever concrete circumstances are real to the participants."<sup>1</sup>

Using a laboratory model similar to separating elements in a chemical compound, Srubek has attempted to isolate the experience of art on the one hand and the process of education on the other and merge them into a real learning experience. It is a worthy effort with implications for both art and education at the teaching level. However, it is too narrowly conceived and drawn to have application for an arts and humanities theory, or for the infusion of a total arts program into a school system. Also, he allowed himself, or perhaps forced himself, to be overly confined and restricted to the laboratory scientific model. The researcher, artistic/humanistic or otherwise, must create and risk new modes of investigation. Kenneth Clark writes:

One of the functions of science is to develop methods which are appropriate to the study of the phenomena that seems worthy of investigation. A goal must be set before the means to reach it can be tested; goals are not to be rejected because the means is elusive. To limit the scope of scientific inquiry to such methods as already exist leads only to scientific stagnation.<sup>2</sup>

The three dissertations dealing with humanities in education having close relevance to this dissertation were "Toward A Theory for Values Development Education" by John S. Steward; "Humanistic Education in America: Its Philosophical Foundations, Present Direction, and Practical Application" by Monte Duane Clute; and "A Theory for Developing Humanities Program for Young Children" by Marianne Gerdes Brown.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Clark, Pathos of Power (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 70.

Of the three, the one most related--in purpose, if not in approach--is "Toward a Theory for Values Development Education." Using the works of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lawrence Kohlberg, the writer, John S. Steward, attempts to "lay the initial groundwork for a theory for values development education."<sup>1</sup> He is concerned with values/moral education in the context of a pluralistic and democratic society. He presents and critiques four approaches to values/moral education: (1) the traditional-authoritarian, (2) the cultural-relativistic, (3) the absolute relativistic, and (4) the organismic-structural-developmental. Of these four only the last is considered consistent with democratic principles. One of the major theses of his dissertation is "that the school is inherently a values/moral system and that this role can be maximized for a pluralistic and democratic society if the school attempts to operate as a just, moral community."<sup>2</sup>

His appears to be the beginning of a sound theory, both in purpose and approach. While our studies share a common purpose--to make schools more democratic in their impact--his would focus our attention upon and ask us to build from the works of three giants in education--Dewey, Piaget, and Kohlberg. This dissertation has no quarrel with his consideration of these great men but differs in that it directs attention not so much to authorities in education as to the rich and diverse content of the arts and humanities.

Monte Duane Clute sees his dissertation as a descriptive research project which examines "humanistic education for the purpose of establishing

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<sup>1</sup> John S. Steward, "Toward a Theory for Values Development Education," (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1974), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

a national definition of the current movement, and providing operational guidelines to work within a humanistic setting."<sup>1</sup> He analyzes contemporary dehumanizing trends within American society and within its schools and examines the direction for change that has been suggested for America's schools. He also presents the responses of a survey made of fifteen leading psychologists and educators in the humanities movement. The survey was to ascertain what the selected fifteen thought were the characteristics of humanistic education and what were some of the more detrimental classroom practices that prevent the achievement of humanistic goals. Among the fifteen queried were Arthur W. Combs, John Holt, Carl Rogers, and Gerald Weinstein. Like Steward's, Clute's dissertation makes its case on the shoulders of recognized authorities in humanistic education. To the extent it shares this characteristic with Steward's dissertation, it differs from this dissertation. Also Clute's study was of a broader scope. His concern is with humanities in American education generally. This study is limited to the public schools.

Using the method of library research, Marianne Gerdes Brown states that, "the purposes of this study were to develop a theory for a humanities program in the elementary school and to implement the theory by designing prototypes in the humanities for kindergarten through the second grade."<sup>2</sup> She saw her problem first as determining the structure of knowledge in the humanities.

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<sup>1</sup>Monte Duane Clute, "Humanistic Education in America: Its Philosophical Foundations, Present Direction, and Practical Application," (Ed.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1974), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Marianne Gerdes Brown, "A Theory for Developing a Humanities Program for Young Children," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1974), p. 17.

Also, she wanted to know what were the distinctive ways of knowing in the arts. She found that each of the five areas of art investigated comprised an autonomous discipline of knowledge, characterized by a distinctive mode of inquiry, set off by elements and by systems of symbols or language and tradition. Human intellect was found to grow out of a state of feeling. She states that the prototypes she developed "need to be taught in actual classroom situations to determine their effectiveness with children."<sup>1</sup>

Her study deals with the content of the humanities and moves in the direction of having a direct impact on the current school curriculum--from kindergarten to the second grade. This study moves toward a theory for an arts and humanities program with the aim of having an impact on an entire school system.

As was suggested earlier, the literature on the arts and humanities in education takes cognizance of a connection between the arts and humanities, and the gifted and talented. To authenticate and better understand this connection, the South Dakota Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the United States Office of Education, Region VIII sponsored a conference in October, 1974 titled National Conference on the Arts and Humanites/Gifted and Talented. The three day conference was held at Black Hills State College, Spearfish, South Dakota.

The content and the emphasis and tone of that conference as gleaned from a written report of its proceedings have relevance for this

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



dissertation. As to content, the conference centered its thinking around the following topics:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) "The Arts and the Gifted: A Stereoscopic View"
- (2) "What Can Be Done?"
- (3) "The Transformation of the Schools," a presentation by Harold Taylor
- (4) "Humanizing the Humanizer" by Murry Sidlin
- (5) "Jazz and the Schools" by Nat Hentoff
- (6) "The Arts and Humanities-What Is Most Human" by Virginia Trotter.

The tone and emphasis of these presentations flowed from and adhered to the contours of two ideas: (1) That in the interest of validity and the nurturing of human potential, an expanded definition of giftedness must be forged, (2) That there is much in the content, habit of minds, and methodologies of the arts and humanities to challenge the gifted. Commissioner Marland's report to Congress states that "Research studies on special needs of the gifted and talented demonstrate the need for special programs for the gifted. . . Art education focused on creative behavior and problem solving was determined to be important for gifted young people."<sup>2</sup> Also, the commissioner's report to Congress contained this statement written by Harold Lyon, director of the United States Office of Education's Office for Gifted and Talented: "Too often the tendency is to push the gifted

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Grove, The Arts and the Gifted: Proceedings From the National Conference on Arts and Humanities/Gifted and Talented, (Spearfish, South Dakota: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED. 112 607, 1976).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

child down the cognitive track and to neglect those affective aspects of learning that help make the individual a truly human being."<sup>1</sup>

The traditional and the new view of giftedness, then, and the relationship of giftedness to the arts and humanities must be taken into account by one attempting to approach a theory of and find a place for the arts and humanities in the public schools.

Finally, the literature on the arts and humanities is interspersed with references to and some instances of direct focusing upon ethnicity and the race problem in the United States. This literature (and this topic) is considered to be of utmost essentiality for one attempting to build a theory of the kind to which this work is directed. However, this body of literature will not be reviewed here, since a chosen slant on portions of it will be extensively treated later in the chapter, "A View of Race and the Black perspective on the Way to a Theory of the Arts and Humanities in Public Education."

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

## CHAPTER III

### DEFINITIONS, DISTINCTIONS, AND CONNECTIONS

A little imagination tempered with a cursory knowledge of history will tell us what finally happened to the child who blurted out that "the emperor had on no clothes," while the rest of the crowd looked on with hypocritical decorum, admiring the emperor's new clothes: (1) Either this child's clear and honest way of seeing was stifled, crushed out (in public school perhaps) and he lived the rest of his life as a dull, conforming, apathetic citizen; or (2) he maintained a superficial conformity to the conventions of society while he raged inside, suppressing many of his vital impulses; or (3) he continued to speak and act on his clear vision until he was discredited, ostracized, and regarded with contempt, curiosity, or amusement--unless he was attracting followers. In which case, he came under the surveillance of powerful forces and was finally killed. Witness Socrates, Christ, Ghandi, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King.

This child, by voicing an unpalatable, naked truth (no pun intended) could symbolize blacks, women, humanists, and artists. As separate groups, they hold in common certain values, assert truths and subscribe to ways of knowing that threaten dominant American social forces. Call theirs an artist/humanist orientation. But although our American society needs

all the help it can get to resolve its social and ecological problems, their views are not sought or taken seriously if given. Unless a massive, irresistible movement can be mounted, those of artist/humanist orientation are ignored or violently resisted or suppressed and their exponents discredited. And society continues, more or less, on its usual course. So that the French are not far from the mark by saying, "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

The point is that the artist/humanist perspective is lost on society, seldom reaches the power centers where socially significant decisions are made and policy is set, and thus has almost no effect on the behavior of people or impact on society.

A major problem in discussing "the arts" and the "humanities" or in moving them toward the center of society, is that their terms have not been clearly enough defined to make a case for their importance outside arts and humanities circles.

Artists and humanists often don't agree on their separate meanings, on what may be classed under each genre or the connection between the two areas.

"The arts," for example, in addition to having an elitist, frilly and sometimes intimidating ring, often connotes either a very narrow range of activities or a broad and confusing array of overlapping ideas and categories.

On the narrow side, most laymen and many school administrators see the arts as comprising no more than painting, sketching and making things with papier-mache, those activities that more logically fall under the title "arts and crafts." And of course an artist, they reason, is one who

works in this area. It would take considerable effort to convince them that "the arts" cover a much broader range of activities, and that an artist may be a writer, a dancer, singer or actor, director, film maker, photographer, etc. That the arts are so narrowly conceived may be tested by asking the average principal or superintendent about the arts offerings in his school or school system, and he will expound on his arts and crafts program.

Once it's understood that the arts cover as extensive a range of activities as, say sports, then the confusion of separating it all out begins in earnest.

First, there is the notion of high and low art or the fine arts and the popular arts. Usually this distinction is made on the basis of whether an art's product or activity is by a recognized genius or someone of less caliber. The work of a genius is said to have withstood or will withstand the test of time and the severest scrutiny of the most critical minds and can be appreciated only by the socially elite. Such works, moreover, are said to have a sureness of style, a correctness of composition, and a subtlety of expression that, despite their universality, cannot be appreciated by ordinary people.

Popular or low art, on the other hand, produced by artists of more or less average ability, are those arts products or activities that the masses can understand. Such art is not expected to withstand the test of time. If it does, it is called folk art.

The problem with this dichotomy is that it ignores the fact that most really great art grows out of the lustiness, the anguish, and the deprivation of the lowest elements of society, the peasant stock, not the elite.

Also, this view has helped perpetuate a hypocritical aura around the arts. So that there is the phenomenon of socially prominent and financially well off people bored stiff by dramatic presentations, museum visits and symphony and ballet concerts, etc., that they neither understand or enjoy, but must endure because they are supposed to appreciate "high art." Tolstoy gives a graphic and insightful account of this phenomena in Chapter 13 of What is Art? He describes how, at a Richard Wagner concert, an elitist audience "habituated" to certain art forms violated the spirit, and the genuine and true purposes of art by faking appreciation for fake art.<sup>1</sup> Obviously this poorly veiled dilettantist approach to art, and the fact that the kinds of audiences referred to have been habituated to appreciate certain sounds and sights, have worked to the detriment of the development of art or moving it (and its values) to the center of society.

Another way of looking at the arts is in terms of how involved a particular art is in the cultural, intellectual, and spiritual life of society. Those most intimately involved are called major arts, others are called minor. From this point of view, flower arranging may be considered a major art in Japan, but certainly not in America. Literature with a capital "L" the best of such genre as the novel, the short story, poetry, the essay, biography, and play-writing; also, dance, music, drama (acting), architecture, painting, and sculpture are major art forms in America--or in any society for that matter. More recently film and photography are making a strong bid for consideration as major art forms in America and in other technologically advanced countries. But interior decorating, commercial designing, sewing, flower arranging (except in the Orient), weaving, and glassblowing are usually thought of as minor arts.

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<sup>1</sup>Tolstoy, pp. 118-130.

Although interior decorating and commercial design may appear to fit the criterion of intimacy with the deep cultural and intellectual life of society, they do not for at least two reasons: (1) The primary concern of these activities is commercial, not artistic; and (2) they are only superficially involved in the cultural and intellectual life of society. The modern Holiday Inn and the local McDonald Hamburger Shop are wonders of interior decoration; just as Disneyland and Six Flags Over Georgia are perfections of commercial design. But anyone seriously concerned with a meaning for the arts commensurate with the spirit of this study would be hard pressed to believe that this decoration and design touches very deeply the spiritual, intellectual, and cultural life of our society.

Still another way of delineating the arts is to view them with regards to the kinds of energy or techniques asserted, the kinds of images and impressions desired, or the kinds of effort required by the artist to produce his art's product or activity. Using this classification, writing, painting, and musical composition are called the "Creative Arts"--demanding long hours of solitude and putting lines or symbols on canvas or paper. Drama, dance, and song are the "Performing or Theatre Arts"--requiring unusual group sensitivity and exquisite timing, voice control, and physical agility. Sculpture, architecture, painting, film making, and photography are "Visual or Graphic Arts." They require the manipulation of certain materials to produce certain visual effects. Sewing, flower arranging, weaving, cooking, gardening, and cabinetmaking are "Practical Arts," which require a knowledge and mastery of the materials used and dexterity with the hands. Interior decorating, commercial designing, modeling, and advertising are "Commercial Arts"--requiring a knowledge of what will catch

the attention of most people. Shoemaking and repairing, automobile repairing, T.V. repairing, diamond cutting, brick masonry, carpentry, catering; and tile, print, and loom setting are "Vocational Arts." These require a knowledge of certain materials, technologies and skills. Often in discussing the arts, these kinds of distinctions are assumed but seldom made explicit by the speaker. Indeed these distinctions are often not clear in the speaker's own mind. More often than not, he is unaware that such distinctions exist.

A final set of ways of thinking about the arts is in terms of their unique contributions to society. First there is the arts-for-arts-sake concept. An idea that seems to suggest that the arts can exist in a vacuum, neither giving to or drawing from their social environment. In this view they need not offer beauty or insight or make any statement about the universe or the human condition. They need only be. This is a rigidly traditional, mainly Western view of the arts. It sees arts products and activities as static and frozen in time. A view that is broader, yet very close to the arts-for-arts-sake idea is arts for beauty's sake, arts as embroidery or luxury.

Other ways of looking at the arts as to their possible contributions to society will be more fully explored in another section of this paper. They include arts as carriers of the cultural heritage, arts as therapy, arts as recreation, arts as an authentic way of knowing and organizing life, and arts as an important social good, as essential to a civilized society.

So the arts may be perceived in many ways: Narrowly, as one set of activities; exclusively, as the province of the elite; as major or minor types based on the depth of their cultural and intellectual involvement



with society; in terms of the kinds of energy required for certain artistic outputs; and finally they may be perceived with regard to their contributions or potential contributions to society.

What then is a reasonably encapsulizing definition of the arts?

In the December 24, 1973, edition of Newsweek, a special issue devoted to the arts in America, cultural editor Jack Kroll, in his introductory overview of the arts, sidesteps the thorny problem of a precise definition by writing:

American art is a service industry in two senses. At one level, art has become a commodity as everything inevitably does in mass society. . . . on another level art is a service industry in an older tradition of which religion is the most important example. . . . Religion took the revelations and insights of certain gifted men and processed them into norms and structures by which people could live. Art has always done something similar.

He further states that art has an advantage over religion in that it can express social "changes with powerful effect even while they're happening."<sup>1</sup>

By using the word "commodity" and by mentioning arts' kinship to religion, Kroll manages to encompass the broad sweep of the arts as ministering to the entire gamut of human needs, from the physical to the spiritual. By using the word "tradition" and by noting the arts capability "to express social change with powerful effect"--and I might add, its potential power to produce social change--he reveals art as being as at home with established tradition as it is with ongoing and expected change.

Accepting the spirit of Kroll's indirect definition and drawing from other sources, I submit for purposes of this paper, the follow eclectic definition of the arts: The arts are those activities which engage one in the pursuit of truth on the subjective level of imagery and feeling. These

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<sup>1</sup> Jack Kroll, "The Arts in America," Newsweek, December 24, 1974, p. 33.

activities involve the selecting of materials and experiences--assembling, composing, and building in the literal sense of putting things together. It is the nature of art to synthesize, rather than to analyze, which is more endemic to science. The arts seek to clarify, intensify, dramatize, and interpret the world in all its physical, social, and spiritual aspects.

That is a sufficient definition of the arts as far as it goes. But one important burden that the arts ought to carry is left out. The arts ought also to sensitize and humanize--to make a person, a society, a culture compassionately aware of the human and ecological context and of the obligation to improve the quality of all life now and for the future. This is, of course, a humanistic rather than an artistic notion. But it is introduced here deliberately, to advance the idea that the arts and humanities are natural allies.

The humanities are primarily concerned with people and the quality of their existence on earth in the past, the present, and the future. In addition to the arts, they embrace theology, philosophy, history, and literature--those systems of thought and of action that pertain to the cumulative evidence of people's relationships with themselves (as individuals, social/political groups and/or nations); with other individuals, groups or nations; and with the Universe-God, Nature. The humanities then--and certainly the arts, being part of the humanities--come from the dust of the earth, from the idea of man as flesh and bone and blood and hope and spirit. They are grounded in the human experience of the ancient and ongoing wisdom of the record of human adventure. They may be thought of as that body of thought that is interested in and that advocates both man's spiritual fulfillment and happiness, and his physical welfare. And

they believe that men can move in the direction of the attainment of fulfillment and physical welfare by their own will and work.

The humanities are the natural home, ally, and proper anchor for the swoops and flights of imagination; and the emotionally depleting or stimulating activities that may characterize the arts. The arts without humanist reference would be like a kite without a string and would go flying off to God only knows where. This free flying spirit encouraged by the arts is not all bad of course, since it is compatible with man's inclinations toward curiosity and adventure. However, the humanities, perceived in this work as a counterweight of the arts, would remind us that we need values, earthly meanings, roots--as well as wings.

To get a further fix on society's perception of the arts and humanities and how they fit into the social fabric, we will examine their place in the economy.

## CHAPTER IV

### ECONOMICS OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

There is no better index to the value society places on a given area of human endeavor than the extent to which that activity is reflected in the society's economic life. Using this criterion, no great amount of documentation is required to make the categorical statement that the arts and humanities rate at or near the bottom in importance to American society. Granted there is a reasonableness about this, considering that the primary value is life itself, survival; and that one's survival is closely tied to the economy (whether it has to be this way is of course another question). When compared to the simple will to live, how one lives or the quality of that life becomes a secondary issue. But this is a better argument for a poverty gripped place like Bombay, India, than for the United States of America, which is said to be the richest and most powerful country in the world. Also, it is a fact of human existence, that even at the most wretched levels of poverty, people manifest an unquenchable and compelling need for spiritual sustenance. It could probably be theorized that no matter how low we sink economically, we would lust for more than bread.

But those who control our economic and political life (and by indirection, control and determine, to a great extent, social values) have placed a heavy emphasis on the bread (material) side of the equation. So

that evidence of economic activities in the arts and humanities (except in their entertainment and commercial aspects) is hard to find in private and public records--budgets, balance sheets, allocation, grants, and loans. For example, in the 1974 Statistical Abstract of the United States, there are data under a small category of "Fine Arts" on the number of museums, dance troupes, and legitimate theatres in the United States and on the number and levels of Fine Arts Degrees conferred in a given year. Under a more extensive heading of "Recreation," is found some skimpy information about outdoor drama and dance presentations in municipal, state, and federal parks and playgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

One exception to the diffused and skimpy nature of these data is the amount of money Congress showed itself willing to appropriate for the Endowment for the Arts and Humanities for 1974, 75, 76.

The final amount approved and signed by the president was less than the figures given. But considering that the Endowment was not even established until 1965 and had remained very much in the background until 1973, these figures suggest a dramatic interest in the arts and humanities.

One of the reasons for this increased interest and funding is the Congress' and the President's concern about some "cultural" presence during the Bicentennial celebration in 1976.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statistical Abstract of the United States, pp. 224, 226 (1974).

<sup>2</sup> Clayton Fritchey, "Nixon Supports National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities," Washington Post, 1 September 1973, Sec. 8, p. 6.

TABLE 1

Funds Approved for the Arts and Humanities  
Endowment by the Senate in 1973

1974	160 million
1975	208 million
1976	400 million

Finding no logical and consistent budgetary breakdown of arts and humanities activities to show their relative economic importance, I chose to compare the amount of federal money allocated to the National Science Foundation (NSF) over a six year period to the amount allocated to the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), Educational Television Facilities and Library Services combined during the same period. These amounts are shown in table 2.

This comparison is based on the assumption that the objectives of the NSF (research and development in the sciences for the production of useful material, devices, systems, or processes) are clearly compatible with the highest priorities of the corporate and political leadership in the United States. The NDEA, E.T.V., and Library Services are viewed here as having a highly artistic/humanistic orientation.

TABLE 2

Comparison of Federal Allocations for the National Science Foundation with Allocations for the National Defense Education Act, Educational Television, and Library Service<sup>a</sup>

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	
Allocations for National Science Foundation							
NSF	3493	3501	3853	4153	4480	4500	Millions of Dollars
Allocations for NDEA, E.T.V., and Library Service							
NDEA	109	74	59	45	46	37	Millions of Dollars
E.T.V.	7	9	5	6	8	9	Millions of Dollars
Library Service	136	186	170	186	237	231	Millions of Dollars
NDEA, E.T.V., and Library Service Combined	252	269	234	237	291	277	Millions of Dollars
Percentage of arts/humanities funds compared to NSF FUNDS	7%	9%	6%	6%	6%	5%	

<sup>a</sup>Statistical Abstract, pp. 440, 452.

It is of interest in studying these figures that NSF funding continued to increase by several millions of dollars yearly, while the combined funds for artistic/humanistic endeavors reached a peak in 1971 and started to decrease. Library Services funds, however, continued to increase until 1973 before they experienced a decrease of 6 million dollars.

The average percentage of funds allocated for each area over a period of six years was 6.5% for artistic/humanist interest and 93.5% for science.

Admittedly this is about as extreme a comparison as could be used to show the relative economic position of the arts and humanities. And it is necessary to "read into" the NDEA, E.T.V. and Library Services values (artistic/humanistic) that are not explicitly stated in their titles or purposes. While these are valid observations, they corroborate rather than refute the fact of an extreme imbalance of priorities and values in American economic life, an imbalance clearly weighed toward quantity and the pursuit of things, rather than toward quality and the constitutional guarantee of "the pursuit of happiness."

Perhaps there are those who find their happiness in ever increasing sizes and accumulations of things. But present ecological considerations (shortages and imminent depletion of certain natural resources, and the problems involved with the disposal and recycling of junk) suggest that the social and human cost of seeking happiness in this way may outweigh its economic advantages. In its noble state, humanism accepts the idea that we are our brother's keeper. For the best social benefit, then, the pursuit of happiness is better practiced in trying to live a fulfilled, worthwhile



life that de-emphasizes greedy acquisition. The material wealth of the earth must be shared, must be more equitably distributed.

Based on a comparison of federal outlays for scientific/technological research and development to research and development in the arts and humanities, the latter are held in low official esteem. Thus, the broad social milieu in which the public schools function is not favorable to the arts/humanities thrust as perceived in this paper.

What is the economic evidence of the place of the arts and humanities in public education? To answer this question, I studied the Atlanta Public School's budgets for three consecutive years--1971-72, 1972-73 and 1973-74.

There may be some question as to whether arts and humanities offerings in one school system located in the Southeastern part of the United States typify the state of arts and humanities in American school systems generally. Certainly school districts may be found that offer comprehensive programs in the arts--if not a unified program of arts and humanities as this study advocates. There is CEMREL, a federally funded national educational laboratory, located in St. Louis, Missouri. It is experimenting with models and ways to get the arts more widely accepted in the public school. But despite the few exceptions, in comparison to the vast number of school districts in the United States, the Atlanta example as typical of the nationwide state of the arts and humanities in education appears generally valid. Darragh Park, assessing the state of the arts in American education, writes:

America has the most powerful institutions for pre-professional and professional arts education in the world. Conservatories, schools of art, colleges of architecture, and professional companies of the dance and ballet all bespeak a first-class specialized system of training.

Museums and schools of cinematography carry out brilliant programs of technical education. And there are even now excellent comprehensive schools of the arts such as the California Institute for the Arts, the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Interlochen School as well as promising developments in New Haven for a consolidated performing arts school. But the arts are too important to be concentrated on the training of artists or potential artists. . . . Today, reflecting current attitudes, elementary, secondary, higher, and continuing education provide only here and there a continuous pattern of experience in the arts to the general student. By and large, the arts are still considered ancillary and suffer earliest at times on budget cutbacks.<sup>1</sup>

Also, to answer this question of funding for arts and humanities in the Atlanta Public Schools, I interviewed Mrs. Lucia G. Dubro, coordinator of the Arts and Humanities at the Memorial Arts Center;<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Alma Simmons, Coordinator of the arts for the Atlanta Public Schools<sup>3</sup> and Mrs. Gwendolyn Beck, Director of the greater Atlanta Arts Council.<sup>4</sup>

A study of the school budget reveals that prior to the 1972-73 school year, there was no category called "Arts and Humanities," or "Humanities" separately. However, in the 1972-73 budget, the arts appear under the budget code 264. Music is under a separate code, number 267. The total amount of money allocated for arts, including music, was \$459,224.25.

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<sup>1</sup>Parks, Arts in Society, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Lucia G. Dubro, Memorial Arts Center, Atlanta, 11 February 1974.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Mrs. Alma Simmons, Atlanta Public Schools' Instructional Service Center, Atlanta, 12 February 1974.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Mrs. Gwendolyn Beck, Peachtree Plaza, Atlanta, 20 February 1974.

Table 3 shows how this money was to be spent.

TABLE 3

The Arts Budget for the Atlanta Public Schools  
1972-1973

ACTIVITY	TOTAL
Program Coordination	\$127,349.28
Memorial Arts Center Functions	26,098.97
Music Program	275,776.10
GRAND TOTAL	\$459,224.35

<sup>b</sup>General Fund Budget and Resource Book, Atlanta Public Schools, pp. 73-75 (1972-73).

Since it may be argued that the arts and sports have at least one important attribute in common--both may be seen as extra-practical, leisure time, and recreationally therapeutic activities--we will take a close look at the financial presence of athletics in the budget.

It should be mentioned that this comparison between the arts and sports may not hold up when judged by the criteria of the amount of popular attention each claims, the amount of money each generates, or by the way they're perceived by the serious artist or athlete. Sports, in addition to popular acceptance, has attained the status of big business, a major economic enterprise. And as suggested, no serious artist or athlete would be overly taken by the recreational aspects of his profession. To him it's work. Despite the differences in social acceptance, their common endemic attribute of being in the "non bread" area of human existence makes the comparison a reasonable one.

Code Number 261--Athletics, Physical Education and Intramural Sports--requires 14 pages of the Atlanta Public School's budget book to list the various amounts and categories of its allocated funds, compared to four pages required for the arts and music.

Table 4 on the next page is a breakdown of allocations for athletics in the 1972-73 budget. It shows that a total of \$1,980,965.50 was budgeted for athletics while \$459,224.35 as shown in table 3 was budgeted for the arts and music, a difference of \$1,521,741.15.

The 1973-74 budget allocates \$1,745,324.89 to athletics and \$1,374,953.87 for arts and music, broken down essentially the same as the 1972-73 budget.

In light of the premise of this paper that budgeting for the arts an obvious question is how do you account for an increase of \$945,729.62 in the 1973-74 budget over the 1972-73 budget? Also, the 1973-74 allocations for the arts and music compare very favorably with allocations for athletics. The answer: According to Mrs. Alma Simmons, Coordinator of Arts in the Atlanta public schools, this dramatic increase is due to two factors: (1) It is from this category that new band uniforms are to be purchased. The bands, of course, play mainly marching music and usually are adjuncts to football teams. (2) Money is also available for the hiring of several additional art teachers. Their teaching will, for the most part, be limited to instruction in "arts and crafts." That is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. There are no programs in drama, dance, or jazz music, which is an authentic art form.

TABLE 4

Athletics, Physical Education, and Intramural Sports Budget  
for the Atlanta Public Schools  
1972-73<sup>c</sup>

	AMOUNT
Program Administration	\$ 46,687.37
Program Coordination	79,593.30
Coordination of Contest Management	536,640.29
Coordination of Equipment, Buildings, and Grounds	323,798.77
Coordination of Schedules, Statistics, and Grounds	15,733.16
Coordination of Medical Services	145,052.50
Coordination of Game Supervision	7,942.40
Coordination of Intramural Program	739.50
Coordination of Physical Education (Secondary and Middle Schools)	49,882.73
Coordination of Elementary Physical Education	57,464.83
Intramural Program of Activities	62,400.00
Teaching of Coaching	338,523.48
Elementary Physical Education	316,459.65
TOTAL	\$1,980,965.50

<sup>c</sup>Ibid., pp. 59-71.

In addition to money allocated for the arts in the school budget, three schools in the Atlanta Public School System benefit from Emergency School Assistance Program (ESAP) funds. These funds (\$69,000 for the 1973-74 school year) support a program in the visual arts administered by the greater Atlanta Arts Council. There is, however, little coordination between this program and other arts programs in the public schools.

The figures, with some interpretation, speak for themselves as to the economic importance of the arts and humanities. But of course, figures do not tell it all. I will comment on two separate items, trends which will have economic impact on liberal arts colleges and on those who tend or would tend toward artistic/humanist pursuits. In the business section of the March 17, 1974, issue of the Charlotte Observer, staff writer Bill Arthur writes of this under the headline, "Liberal Arts Degrees Open Few Job Doors Today." After interviews with university placement directors and employment service managers Arthur says: "The old tenet that a liberal arts degree prepared one for most jobs and was an entryway into the world of business is fast being undermined." The director of placement at Davidson, a liberal arts college in North Carolina, told Arthur that "Employers have to be philosophers to use liberal arts people. They've got to believe that the man is more important than the technicalities of performing the job."<sup>1</sup>

If this (the decline of interest in liberal learning) bodes ill for the arts and humanities, perhaps the following item is more encouraging. There has been a recent attempt to develop arts administrators who not

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<sup>1</sup>Bill Arthur, "Liberal Arts Degrees Open Few Job Doors Today," Charlotte Observer, 17 March 1974, Sec. C., p. 2.

only have a wide and deep perspective on the arts and humanities, but will also be knowledgeable and competent in the application of business methods to their jobs. The Harvard University Business School is the pioneer in this endeavor. It has conducted for the past five years Summer Institutes in Arts Administration. The month long institutes are based on the assumption that if artist/humanists better understood the economy in general and business methods in particular they would have more success in promoting the arts and humanities at a high level of excellence and as viable economic entities.

These two items (together with the economic evidence on the arts and humanities' status in public education and in society) suggest that the artist and the humanist have their work cut out if they and society are to benefit from their chosen way of life. Liberal learning (arts and humanities) must be prepared to do battle, get its hands dirty and learn to sell itself. The first step might be with artists and humanists themselves: that they come out of the 18th and 19th century and stop thinking of their pursuits as cloistered, aristocratic leisure time activities and begin to see themselves and their profession as worthy of full participation in our economic life. They must insist that what they have chosen to do is work, not play—very essential work to a civilized society—so that there could be a legitimately established, socially viable area of inquiry and work called the arts and humanities. The writer, painter, actor, or philosopher would not have to be exiled in (or out of) his own country, but could live an economically secure life and be accepted at the center of society as a valued and authentic person making an important contribution, carrying his own economic weight.

The typical American businessman, Henry James once wrote, tended to view "culture as the special concern of women, foreigners and other impractical persons."<sup>1</sup> "And why not?" Kroll asks. "For measured against the businessman's ideals of efficiency and productivity, the arts have always flunked. In a society which relies on mechanization, the arts are notoriously handmade. Unlike the auto worker or farmer, whose productivity per man hour has risen sharply as a result of mechanization, a symphony orchestra player is doing his job in the same way that he did a hundred years ago."<sup>2</sup> When confronted by rising costs, like every other industry, the orchestra cannot apply labor-saving devices: to play a Mozart symphony still requires what it always required.

Eric Larrabee, the executive director of the New York State Council on the Arts says, "The arts in this country are on a starvation diet."<sup>3</sup> So that it is possible to assert that the arts and humanities do not flourish in the market place, they hardly show up as an economic entity. Despite the fact that the tax laws have long promoted private patronage and the establishment of non-profit institutions for the arts, despite the fact that the major foundations have arts and humanities components and despite the fact that the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities budget has swelled since its creation in 1965--but only to the level, in the fiscal year 1974, of \$60.8 million--these facts notwithstanding, it is the position

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<sup>1</sup> Kroll, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Place of the Arts in New Towns, Educational Facilities Laboratories' Report, Spring (1973), p. 13.



of this paper that what C. Wright Mills calls the Power Elite (powerful corporate and political interests) sees it in its best interests to maintain an economic and political curtailment of the arts and humanities.

The next section will consider the political aspects of arts and humanities in society and in education.

## CHAPTER V

### SOME POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

When considering how political decisions are reached and which ideas or actions are selected and executed by professional politicians, it is instructive to reflect on this fact: The Vietnam war continued with full American involvement for three to five years after both the Louis Harris and George Gallup polls showed consistently that 70 to 85 percent of Americans wanted the United States to withdraw from the war. In a democracy that professes to be ruled by the people a proper question is: What kept America involved in the Vietnam war against the people's will?

Similarly, a recent poll by the National Research Center for the Arts, a new division of the Louis Harris Organization, revealed that 64% of the American public would be willing to pay \$5 a year in taxes to maintain and operate cultural facilities. In other words, the American people may already realize what their elected officials and employers are only slowly coming to realize: that the arts are the inescapable charge on any society for the privilege of being human.

Also, a 1973 survey in New York State found a real thirst for more access to a wide variety of cultural activities at every socio-economic level. More than 80% of the sample felt that the arts are important to

life (even if they have little contact with them); and nearly half attended performances or museums frequently or participated in at least one art form.

The same survey also found the following: (1) the public wants cultural facilities in their home neighborhoods. More people feel it is important for a community to have a good theatre (26%) than sports stadiums (17%). Another desired facility is an arts and crafts workshop, particularly wanted by the elderly and less affluent. (2) One-third of the public feels that not having enough cultural facilities available ranks as a major problem. This concern was listed ahead of such highly publicized issues as poor housing and poor schools. (3) There is a direct correlation between early exposure to the arts and current interest in them. For example, 32% of all those interviewed went to art museums often as children. (4) The public wants more arts courses taught for credit and included in the core curriculum (as high as 78% depending on the specific course). Teenagers showed relative lack of interest in culture-centered trips but responded even more enthusiastically than their elders to creative activities courses for credit. In general, they showed, a positive attitude toward the arts. (5) People want and obtain artistic satisfaction from a broad range of activities. Many of the answers regarding favorite leisure-time pursuits strike "a strong note of basic functional esthetics."<sup>1</sup>

Based on these data, it is reasonable to assume that there is public interest in the arts and humanities--perhaps more widespread than is commonly believed. Why then are the arts and humanities not more evident as an organized and viable force in society?

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<sup>1</sup>The Place of the Arts in New Towns, Educational Facilities Laboratories' Report, Spring (1973), p. 13.

To answer this question, I will postulate that the arts and humanities are politically threatening; and therefore, they have been kept in check by the politically powerful.

To support this assertion, I will go back to the roots of this threat, to two philosophical positions that gave rise to two strains of thought that run through Western Civilization. These two different ways of thinking were incorporated in the teaching of Socrates and Aristotle. A rough but accurate statement of their separate positions would be: Socrates was more egalitarian, more democratic in his philosophical and political stance. He believed in the searching, inquisitive mind of every man, self-realization and personal autonomy. Today he might be called a populist. Aristotle, on the other hand, held aristocratic views (the word itself is derived from his name). He believed, for example, that there were three kinds of men born to certain stations in life. He did not mention women. A few men were, according to Aristotle, made of gold; these were the rulers. Some were made of silver; these were second echelon men who would carry out or enforce the rulers' edicts. And the rest, the great majority, were made of brass and lesser metals; they were to be ruled.

Although the Socratic view has held its own and survives to some degree as a reality, it survives to a greater degree as an inspirational ideal and as a rhetorical rallying point for the ordering of society. It is the Aristotelian view that has prevailed as the dominant political reality throughout Western civilization. Also, it is worth noting that Aristotle is credited with giving us scientific reasoning, a way of thinking suited to conquest and material production. Socratic egalitarianism or artistic irrationality could not possibly stand against the awesome, raw power that could be mustered out of Aristotelian concepts.

In addition to the fact that those in power have been sustained by the thinking of Aristotle, they have--following the Aristotelian model of rigid compartmentalization--kept the arts separated from real life. This is the traditional "arts-for-arts-sake" idea which permeates Western thought.

Playwright Lonnie Elder III writes:

As they are currently thought of in America, the concepts of "art" and "artist" are false. They are unrelated to social realities--unconnected. These concepts have very little correspondence with those realities that come to us in our dreams and with those that are apparent in the dangers that confront us in life. We are anxious to set art aside from reality. The premise on which these concepts are based is a fraud. . . . The tendency is to look upon everyday reality as something of little importance and art as a thing in itself. We presuppose for the purposes of art a submerged or more profound reality, transcending Death, Violence and America. And yet, Death, Violence and America are real and terrifying, and constitute active threats against all living things. In its insistence on mystifying and hallucination, art has become in the main an instrument of escape from reality.<sup>1</sup>

The last sentence supports the position that art itself has been taken in by this arts-as-separate notion and accepts its own non-relevance and its place at the periphery of society, a gradual but effective coup d'etat for politics over arts. What could be a more complete example of conquest than having the rape victim actively cooperate in her own rape? Symbolically, this is what the arts have done. Perhaps they have had no other choice. The forces arrayed against a viable presence of the arts at the center, rather than at the edge of society, have been too formidable. For political power from the top has always been buttressed by military power. And it is a historical truth that politics has always viewed art with suspicion, always been threatened by the artistic/humanistic thrust. "When I hear the word

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<sup>1</sup>Lonnie Elder III, "The Artist as Perceiver of Social Realities," The Arts in Society, 3 (Fall 1973): p. 509.

culture, I reach for my revolver,"<sup>1</sup> said Hermann Göring. The No. 2 Nazi makes a wonderfully symbolic figure to express the uneasy attitudes toward "culture" and "the arts" shared by men both powerful and powerless ever since the Industrial Revolution began to shape the kind of society most Westerners live in. "The uneasiness is only natural, art and man being what they are—man being a hungry, thirsty, yearning, frightened angel - brute lusting after truth, beauty, power and ecstasy; art being the prime source of precisely those things."<sup>2</sup>

Why does political power feel threatened by the arts? I will put forth four reasons, without pretending they are exhaustive. First, there is the spiritual, non-tangible nature of the arts which puts them in the category of the nebulous. So that the politician could justifiably say, "I know that the arts are into something; but I can't pin down exactly what it is." This quality runs counter to political power's needs for concreteness and control.

Second, there is the arts' attraction for the mysterious, its need to be at the cutting edge, its critical and questioning nature, its inclination toward both fundamental and new truth and its insistence on seeking truth in its own irrational way. This is at variance with power's need for stability,

Third, there is its perceived tendency to disdain dogma, political institutions and materialism, and its philosophical acceptance of death as part of life, an attitude that renders fear (of economic reprisals or of death) less effective as means of social control.

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<sup>1</sup>Kroll, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Finally, there is arts propensity toward autonomous cooperation as opposed to group-thinking and manipulated competition. "Divide and conquer" belongs to the political, not the artistic arena.

The political powers have kept the artist/humanist at bay in several ways. In addition to advancing the notion of the arts non-relevance to the real world—a position which, as we have seen, artists themselves came to accept—the political forces, working hand in hand with corporate interests have helped to dilute, commercialize, institutionalize, and integrate weak imitations of the arts into the mainstream of modern life. They have usurped many of the more frothy conventions of the arts and used them to political advantage (note political packaging, oratory and T. V. advertisement). They have resorted to legal censorship of the arts when it has been politically expedient to do so, starved the arts and artists economically, and in general have helped to create and maintain a social environment indifferent, but just as often hostile, to the values and practice of the arts and humanities. It is not a coincidence that intellectual and artistic alienation is so rampant in American society.

But when all else fails to blunt the artistic/humanistic thrust, political power resorts to violence. Obvious historical examples would be the Roman empire's response to Christianity, the killing of Socrates and the "Middle American" hatred of Martin Luther King.

Concerning how society has dealt with the threat of the arts, Barry Schwartz writes:

Those who express surprise at the fact that in our time the arts have become institutionalized and integrated within the mainstream of modern life are naive, for society will accept the artist as long as his art is not effectively critical. The technological system within which we now live, like other systems offering regulation

and security, harnesses the forces of culture to provide affirmation of the system. . . . As art has become integrated within society and with the creation of the art marketplace, planned obsolescence has been built into art. The artist, in turn, has been redefined in ways that are consistent with the role of the professional, with the specialization and the marginal importance assigned to his endeavor. . . . We are living with what amounts to a science-centered curtailment of human understanding.<sup>1</sup>

This delineation of politics and the arts should not necessarily be taken as an indictment of political processes; nor should it be inferred that the political processes used in dealing with the arts were always used with malice, or deliberately used to stifle what has been referred to as the artistic/humanistic thrust. For political systems once set into motion tend to generate their own, almost automatic, responses to perceived threats.

Also, it should be stressed that all the problems in the arts and humanities cannot be attributed to political and economic suppression. The next section will consider some of these problems that are endemic to the nature of the arts and humanities.

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<sup>1</sup>Barry Schwartz, "Arts: The Humanist Alternative," The Arts in Society, 3 (Fall 1973) p. 8.



## CHAPTER VI

### PROBLEMS AND VALUES OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES AND THEIR PLACE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

#### Problems

Obviously there are many reasons why the arts and humanities have not experienced a full flowering in society and in public education. Some have already been touched upon. We have seen, for instance, that the arts and humanities suffer from a confusion of terms, from the lack of an agreed upon, easily articulated definition, which makes it difficult to defend or justify them as socially beneficial. We have seen that they have inherent values that are seen as threatening to a stable society; that they are prostituted to elitism, dilettantism and commercialism. And we have seen that they have been economically starved and politically dispossessed.

But there are other problems which make for the arts' and humanities' poor showing in both society and the public schools--problems that may not arise directly or indirectly out of either the arts' and humanities' inability to sell themselves or out of economic and political curtailment.

What follows is a discussion of growth-impeding problems in the arts which seem, as Willie Loman\* says, "to go with the territory," problems

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\*The main character in Author Miller's classic American play Death of a Salesman.

that require understanding before attempting to build a sound theory of arts and humanities in education.

First, there are the problems endemic to the American culture, its people and their attitudes. Many social critics and reputable free lance thinkers and writers—including Richard Wright, Mark Twain and James Baldwin—have commented on the anti-intellectual nature of American society. They have attributed it to the working class masses who came here from Europe and to America's frontier experience. Other critics with allegiance to the Third World, Frantz Fanon among them, see a connection between the oppressive colonist mentality and anti-intellectualism. Whatever its source, an anti-intellectual atmosphere is poisonous to the flourishing of the arts and humanities. For they—unlike sports, another extra-practical area—are deeply involved in the intellect.

Another philosophical (and in this case theistic) predilection in American culture which works to the detriment of arts and humanities is Puritanism with its oppressive work ethic and its rigid sexual morality. This flies in the face of the arts' needs for freedom, unbound imagination, and personal expression. The bureaucratic nature of American society also runs counter to the arts' unstructured needs. The grim competitiveness of American society with an ostensibly free, but often manipulated economy, the male chauvinistic, middle class ethos, the enshrinement of the scientific method and the acceptance of "scholarly research" as the only authentic ways of discovering truth, constitute a barren and hostile atmosphere for the arts and humanities.

A second set of obstacles blocking the arts and humanities from the center of society are characteristics endemic to artists themselves, characteristics that make for societal rejection.

First and foremost is the artist's predisposition toward unrelenting criticism of ideas and dogmas, his disdain for institutions, his fierce independence of thought, often bordering on fanaticism, and his tendency toward self-exile. These qualities do not make him the most delightful associate or the most desirable person for the realization of group goals. But there is a paradox here. For the arts, especially the performing arts--dance, drama and music--offer the most perfect examples of organizational behavior and group cooperation.

Another problem the artist has is coming to terms with his anti-scientific, intuitive rationality (or irrationality) in a heavily scientific, technological environment. This is a source of much anguish for many artists with the possible exception of those who work in technological media, such as the photographer and the film maker.

Still another problem the artist must overcome before he can hope to be considered a part of the real world is his nearly fatal entanglement in the elitist, dilettantist web--a web made up of wealthy arts patrons, society matrons and the awesome ego of the artist wallowing in exclusivity. Certainly and just as importantly the artist needs to question the tradition of art as form at the expense of art as content. A poem does mean despite Archibald MacLeish's statement to the contrary.

And finally, there is what some have referred to as the "tragic imperative" of the arts and artists, their seemingly natural tendency to

try to teach the good by revealing and dramatizing the evil. Edgar Lee Masters, noted American poet, focuses on this problem in the last lines of the poem "Seth Compton" from his Spoon River anthology:

and often you asked me,  
What is the use of knowing the evil  
in the world? (He answers)  
That no one knows what is good  
Who knows not what is evil;  
And no one knows what is true  
Who knows not what is false.<sup>1</sup>

So problems abound, both extrinsic and intrinsic to the arts and humanities, to keep them from becoming a viable force at the center of society. But despite their seeming inability to assert their claim to legitimacy, despite their economic and political suppression, and despite problems endemic to both them and society, the arts and humanities survive in complete confidence that they have some unique values, and can make worthy and needed contributions to a jaded society. Darragh Parks writes:

Without touting the arts as the all-purpose nostrum, we bear witness to the unique capacity of the arts, both in themselves and instrumentally, to make formal and informal education work better, and to thereby enhance life for both the individual and society.<sup>2</sup>

and John Dewey before her wrote:

Just as it is the office of art to be unifying, to break through conventional distinctions to the underlying common elements of the experienced world, while developing individuality as the manner of seeing and expressing these elements, so it is the office of art in the individual person, to compose differences, to do away with isolations and conflicts among the elements of our being to utilize oppositions among them to build a richer personality.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Edgar Lee Masters, "Seth Compton," in Adventures in American Literature, ed. Edmund Fuller (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963), p. 266.

<sup>2</sup>Parks, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

Values

This study will not claim that the arts and humanities build good character as is claimed by sports (a statement that recent scholarly scrutiny has found wanting). But it does assert that given a more central place in the social milieu, the arts and humanities are uniquely suited to affect the character of society to a degree at least comparable to the influence once exerted by religion. Compared to religion, the arts and humanities should have some advantages. They are not burdened, as is religion, with having to prove (or disprove) the existence of God or heaven or hell, concepts the modern mind is increasingly questioning or finding new interpretations for. The corollary of this and second advantage of the arts and humanities is that, unlike religion, they harbor no element or tradition of personal condemnation--except as they have been exploited by religion. Their spirit is supportive of the individual, empathetic to the human condition.

Perhaps, also, to a higher degree than any other area of human interest, the arts and humanities have an attitude of mind which attaches primary importance to man and his faculties, worldly affairs, temporal aspirations and his well being. Despite the natural tie between religion, drama, and dance, and despite the great body of religious Renaissance art, their spirit is secular, liberal, and tolerant; their method, education, free inquiry, and enlightenment. They emphasize the authenticity of imagination and of the directly experienced world, stress both discipline and creativity and dare to mix feeling with thought. Such a dare is no small matter in a compartmentalized society that prides itself on cool, detached scientific reasoning.

The arts and humanities also have aesthetic and spiritual values to teach; are the foremost carriers of our cultural heritage; and, the arts especially, have therapeutic and recreational value. John D. Rockefeller 3rd of the JDR 3rd Fund touches on many of the individual and social values of the arts with these words:

I am convinced that the quality of our individual lives and the quality of our society are directly related to the quality of our artistic life. I cannot prove this to you mathematically or in a test tube, but I know it as an article of faith and I know it through experience, and I believe that you know it too. . . . If we really care about the dignity of the individual, about his potential for self-fulfillment, then we must have a deep and rich sense of the arts in our individual lives. We need the arts if we are to be whole human beings--fully alive and vital and in control of ourselves and our environment. We need the arts as the key to the higher order of things--our cultural heritage, our gift of expression, our creative faculty, our sense of beauty. We need the arts if we are to have discriminating tastes, the ability to judge levels of quality in all the works of man. And we need them if we are to have the truth.<sup>1</sup>

Although some artistic endeavors are naturally isolating and highly individualistic (like writings or paintings), as a whole the arts foster, and their major thrust is toward, human cooperation. Also, they foster open-mindedness, individual and group creativity, and teach postponement of gratification without sacrificing the exhilaration of total involvement in the here and now. They acquaint us with an ambiguity that allows each of us personal authenticity and a valid interpretation of life, so that one can truly feel his self-worth. The arts teach the rudiments of organization. The painter, poet, dancer, film-maker must ever be concerned with parts fitting and working together. The arts and humanities encourage us to imagine better selves, better others, better worlds and to see infinite possibilities of organizing existing

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<sup>1</sup>John D. Rockefeller 3rd, "The Arts as Essential to Civilized Society," address given in St. Louis, April 1970.

realities and diverse elements into better futures. They promote an attitude which moves one away from the rigidity of right and wrong answers. And in the arts especially, one finds a constructive outlet for intense emotional feelings, thus theoretically reducing the incidence of real violence and aggression in society.

And finally the methods, spirit, and habit of mind of the artist and humanist are authentic ways of knowing. The artist (painter or poet) with his incisive vision and vivid imagination is usually there (beyond the cutting edge) before the scientist. H. G. Wells had imagined with almost pinpoint accuracy what a visit to the moon would be like. Richard Wright wrote the truth about the black psyche in white America long before Kenneth Clark "proved" him right with psychological methods. And Shakespeare's insights on society, on power and justice, on personal and group relationships are so accurate that sociologists, psychologists, and psychiatrists still marvel at what he knew and how he knew it.

But these values will not become greatly infused into society until the arts and humanities as an area of inquiry are organized to take advantage of their unique strengths and focus them on present and future social problems. One way of viewing this mammoth task is the concern of the next chapter. And several approaches to the task of infusing the arts and the humanities into the public school curriculum are sketched in the summary, following the next chapter. However, before considering the next chapter and the sketched possible approaches in the summary, seven postulates are tendered as a synthesis of thinking to this point and as the beginning of a theory, followed by a rationale for organizing an arts and humanities program in the public schools.

### Seven Postulates: The Beginning of a Theory

Having set forth a certain view of the arts and humanities, having shown some distinctions and the connections between them and sketched their relative, perceived, and potential importance to society--having in other words, established a platform of logical relationships and of sound concepts--I offer seven postulates concerning the arts and humanities. These postulates may be considered as the beginning of a theory on a place for the arts and humanities in education and in society and as the bases for further thinking about possible ways (models) of organizing the arts and humanities in the public schools.

Webster's Seventh Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun postulate as, "a hypothesis advanced as an essential presupposition or premise of a train of reasoning." It is in this spirit that the following seven postulates are advanced.

- (1) The arts and humanities suffer from a confusion of terms.
- (2) The arts and humanities are not organized for maximum impact in society.
- (3) The arts and humanities as organized, viable entities are almost non-existent in most public schools and have very little influence in American society.
- (4) The arts and humanities are seen by the corporate and political elite as threatening to its interests.
- (5) The arts and humanities have unique qualities that impede their social acceptance.
- (6) The arts and humanities have unique and intrinsic values important to a civilized society.
- (7) The arts and humanities have participated in fostering and perpetuating their own impotency.

These seven postulates are set forth as one view of the "truth" as to how the arts and the humanities are conceived, perceived and practiced,



and serve as a foundation, skeleton, and a backdrop for building a sound theory and forging a place for the arts and humanities in public education and in society. And these seven considerations should be taken into account by anyone wishing to reason effectively toward the objective of organizing the arts and humanities as a viable program in the public schools.

Certainly these seven postulates and the reasoning from which they grow assume a synonymy between society and education or between the school and community. Henry Steele Commager, speaking at the 1974 AASA Convention in Atlantic City, recognized this synonymy by saying: "As we interpret society in terms of education, so we can describe education in terms of society or community. For it is, after all, the community which performs the major job of education, not the schools."

The first part of this statement supports well enough the view that education reflects society and vice versa. But the last sentence raises a question for this study, which is advocating organizing the arts and humanities in and through the public schools.

### Why Organize Through Public Education?

If the community performs the major job of education, why then the imperative to organize the arts and humanities in public schools?

First the arts and humanities need a structure in which to live and to afford them official support, status and legitimacy. Since they are, among other things, intellectual pursuits, their natural home should be the house of education. Higher education has helped and hurt in this regard. It has been a house, but not an adequate one. It has been too removed from the community and too pedantic and conservatively academic in its

approach to the arts and humanities to allow their full flowering in society or even in the university for that matter. Also, higher education has generally accepted and perpetuated the elitist view, particularly of the arts--and of the humanities to a lesser degree. But to advance the practice and view of the arts and humanities in keeping with the spirit of this study--to advance their social relevance and benefit--it is important that their house/home be in society; that they be intricately tied to and involved with the community. The public schools fit both the criteria of structure, and involvement with the community.

A second reason the arts and humanities should be organized in the public schools is to foster the pursuit of excellence, not only in artistic or humanistic studies and practices, but in all endeavors; and to maintain a well defined core of quality, to help students learn to make aesthetic judgments. So that even if the arts are not saved from commercialism on the one hand and elitism on the other, there would be an awareness of the distinctions between various levels and qualities of arts' activities. One would know if his is an elitist or a popular view of art. Or he would know if and why he agrees with a particular artistic view, concept, or practice.

Third, the public schools appear to be the best vehicle for the discovery, development, and display of artistic talent, for the nurture of an artistic/humanistic point of view, and for the democratic practice of the arts and humanities--arts activities and humanistic ideas growing out of people for people.

A fourth reason for organizing a complete program of arts and humanities in the public schools is for the sake of the public schools. If public education really wants to become vital and exciting, if it is

serious about exploring the affective domain and humanistic education, nothing better fits this purpose than a seriously undertaken, rigorously designed arts and humanities program.

The arts have always been comfortable with human feeling, expression, and imagination; and the humanities see as their chief *raison d'être* right relationships among people.

Whatever the reason for its introduction, an arts and humanities program could bring a whole new dynamic to the dull, depressing state characteristic of so much of public education today. Such a program, thoughtfully undertaken, could have an enormous potential in the area of human relations, an area in which public education and society need and will continue to need all the help they can get. What could offer a better opportunity to teach an appreciation for personal, cultural, and racial differences, to face and act positively on the truth that there is no melting pot in America? What better way to help one come to creative terms with oneself, one's neighbors and with the world in all of its diversity, contradiction, and flux?

And finally there is the traditional, if not the original idea that has fueled public education from the beginning: to prepare students for life, for the real world, for the future. Irving Buchen, writer and curriculum designer, writing in Learning for Tomorrow, a book of essays edited by Alvin Toffler, writes that the individual best fitted for tomorrow will be

multiple rather than singular. If the traditional notion in the West has been one God, one love, one job, one identity, one country, and one planet, the futuristic notion is many gods, many loves, many jobs, and many planets. . . . He (the person of the future) will be capable of sustaining many allegiances, without contradiction, on both a national

and international scale, and be closer to being, especially through the concept of global perspectives, a world citizen.

These then are five reasons why the arts and humanities should be organized into a viable program in the public schools. But given schools interrelationship with society and the American society's success at frustrating the aspirations of some of its citizens, how may a theory be conceptualized for maximum humanistic effect in the schools? The prospective theorist concerned with improving the quality of life may answer this question by assuming the view of those whose aspirations have been thwarted, the oppressed, the victimized. The slave's viewpoint, he may decide, is, in some cases, more useful than the master's. Reasoning accordingly, the next chapter considers the race problem and a black perspective.

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<sup>1</sup>Irving H. Buchen, "Humanism and Futurism: Enemies or Allies?" in Learning for Tomorrow, ed. Alvin Toffler (New York: Random House 1974), p. 137.

CHAPTER VII

A VIEW OF RACE AND A  
BLACK PERSPECTIVE ON THE WAY  
TO A THEORY OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Two ideas will be developed in this chapter: one is that a consideration of the race problem in the United States is important to the development of a theory for the arts and humanities in the public schools. The other is that in the interest of arriving at a sound theory, the race problem needs to be viewed from a black perspective. It will attempt to answer the questions: 1. Why is a consideration of the race problem important? 2. Why should it be viewed through a black perspective?

In considering, and choosing among, the infinite concepts and concerns that bear on a question, one would do well to take note of reoccurring unresolved issues endemic to the topic under investigation. One such issue in this case is the race problem in the United States--those issues designated by such terms as: racism, race relations, civil rights, and the black perspective. Dubois saw it as a world wide incubus early in his career. In 1903, he wrote, "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line--the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa,

in America and the islands of the sea."<sup>1</sup> Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, saw the race problem in America as hopeless of solution and advocated the colonization of freed blacks outside the United States. He said: "Deep-rooted prejudices entertained by whites; ten thousand recollections by the blacks of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances will produce convulsions, which will probably never end but in the extermination of one race or the other."<sup>2</sup> The race question has been the theme of many non-fiction works as well as novels, short stories and plays and has been a prime generator of myths. Anthropologist Francis Ashley Montagu calls the concept of "race" a fallacy and contends by the title of his book that it is man's most dangerous myth.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the problem of race in America is couched in terms of the survival of black people in America.<sup>4</sup> But most often it has been viewed and reported as the Negro problem. Conant, former president of Harvard, manages a sentence that almost blames slavery in the United States on the slaves and subtly encourages the reader to see black people as a disease. He writes, "As I read the history of the United States, this republic was born with a congenital defect--Negro

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<sup>1</sup>W.E.B. Dubois, The Souls of Black Folk (New York: Washington Square Press, 1970), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>James B. Conant, Slums and Suburbs (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>M. F. Ashley Montagu, Man's Most Dangerous Myth; The Fallacy of Race (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945).

<sup>4</sup>Samuel F. Yette, The Choice: The Issue of Black Survival in America (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1971).

<sup>5</sup>Conant, p. 6.

Myth or not, we're stuck with the concept and thus with the problem of race, no matter from whose viewpoint we have been socialized or choose to see it. And unlike many countries which are more homogeneous in racial composition, the United States, being the meeting ground of many races, has perhaps the most challenging version of this problem. Being both a world and a national problem, it may be termed basic to the human condition, and therefore, of central consideration for one concerned with human relations. Thus the humanist cannot in good conscious avoid this issue.

The concept and the problem of race have a direct impact upon how people relate to each other. It has been suggested that race may indeed be more profoundly inculcated and more fanatically practiced and appealed to than nationalism. Disraeli is reported to have commented, "All is race; there is no other truth."

Gary T. Marx explains that the race problem in the United States was forged "by the conquest and colonization of the American Indian, the enslavement and transfer of Africans, and by the voluntary migration of European and Asian peoples." Mentioning both the positive and the negative implications of this mixture, he writes:

The mixture of all these groups has given American society a richness and healthy diversity with respect to matters such as artistic styles, speech, food and holidays that is lacking in countries more homogeneous in race, religion and national origin. Yet it has meant a much higher degree of conflict structured along ethnic lines. The most significant of such conflicts are clearly those involving blacks and whites.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gary T. Marx, "Racism and Race Relations," Confrontation: Psychology and the Problems of Today, ed. Michael Wertheimer (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1970), p. 100.

So there is a deep seated and intense race problem in the United States that needs to be faced. Its most severe manifestations are between blacks and whites; and it is plainly within the purview of the arts and humanities and of one in search of a theory for arts and humanities in public education.

One reason for grappling honestly and seriously with this problem-- apart from the fact that this has not been attempted by any major American institution--may be found in a widely accepted psychological principle. Of course, the principle was long recognized in the humanities--in theological and philosophical theory--before psychology "proved" it valid. It is sometimes referred to as "accepting your cross." The principle is, that: to be mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically--and thus optimumly--healthy, one must often wrestle with, wring out, and learn to live with a valid meaning of himself. This coming to grips must include an assessment of positive as well as negative traits that a person would like to deny--things that have gone into his making with or without his control or approval, or things that he may be currently imbibing and receiving profit from. They may be things he hates, fears, or feels guilty about; characteristics or facts about himself or evil designs and longings within himself that he projects onto others. Perceiving and facing one's negative attributes along with the positive ones, humanists and psychologists tell us, is a prime and often necessary step to becoming a whole person. Reason would seem to suggest that if this is good for an individual it is good for a society.

True, it is an administrative principle and common sense that some problems are best ignored, watched perhaps, and left to solve themselves. It would be the sheerest kind of speculation to say that the race problem



is or is not that kind of problem. But reflect for a moment on how those seeing themselves as advantaged by a certain social order will fight to maintain it, cling to the status quo, and resist change. And those who want change are unlikely to cease agitating for it. Hence, the better conjecture would seem to be that this problem will not go away or resolve itself.

The United States' version was, in fact thoroughly documented and labeled The American Dilemma\* in 1944, by the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal. W. E. B. Dubois, in his classic work The Philadelphia Negro\* had done no less a thorough study of a piece of this problem covering a smaller geographic area forty-six years before Myrdal in 1898. It is as big, complex, and as painful to deal with today as it was then. Thus there is ample room and reason for it to be attacked from many disciplines and many viewpoints. So, why a black

Obviously, other ethnic groups must be considered in a total study of this problem; but as Gary T. Marx reminds us, in its final analysis, it comes down to a conflict between blacks and whites. Obviously, also, there ethnic groups and their scholars have worthy views reflecting their particular ethnic origin that would contribute both to the resolving of the race problem and to a search for a theory of arts and humanities for the public schools vis-a-vis the race problem. A Jewish perspective, for example, based on the Jewish experience would therefore seem to have much to offer in this regards. Still this study, in moving toward a theory of the kind to which it aims, advocates serious consideration of a black perspective--especially in approaching that part of a theory which deals with the race problem

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\*See bibliography.

in the United States. This means that the prospective theory builder must be selective in his choice of ideas, resources, and materials. He must read carefully the philosophical and political leanings of those whose ideas he would use. Hence, much of the literature and "scientific studies" on the "disadvantaged" and the "culturally deprived" must be disqualified. In short all "victim blaming" ideas, no matter how sophisticated, subtle, or seemingly well meaning, that tend to approach the problem of race as a Negro problem, as black pathology, must be detected, demolished, and rejected as negative and counter-productive for the purposes of those called "disadvantaged." The search for a humane and just theory for children, who have been "labeled" and victimized must take a more positive route. On the other hand all substance free, black rhetoric and similar sympathetic white or other kinds of rhetoric must be excluded from consideration for such a theory.

Making certain the right kinds of ideas are included in on the way to a theory and the wrong kinds excluded out is the first and overriding reason a black perspective is advocated . Is a black perspective more discerning? No. Is it more moral, ethical or just? Not necessarily. But a black perspective would tend to be more protective and supportive of those who have been the usual victims of the more conventional, widespread, and institutionalized views.

Second, with regards to the arts, the arts have always valued an authentic reflection of experience, feeling, and culture. The black perspective growing out of 350 years of special experience in passage from Africa and on American soil meets this important artistic criterion and is a valid view of American society. And surely the American culture has been enriched

and positively influenced by black contributions in the arts--particularly in music, dance, theater, and literature. Of these, black literary efforts have been most ignored and suppressed. Until recently, black writers and writings were not typically or prominently included in public school texts books.

Also, a black perspective tends to separate life and art less. This is seen as growing out of the African heritage, and in America from what Barbara Jackson refers to as a "dual enculturation process"--a process whereby slaves, for survival sake, had to make meaning and forge personal and group unity from two cultures.<sup>1</sup> Leroi Jones (Amamu Baraka) writes:

It was, and is inconceivable in the African culture to make a separation between music, dancing, song, the artifact, and a man's life or his worship of his gods. Expression issued from life, and was hearty. But in the West, the triumph of the economic mind over the imaginative, as Brook<sub>2</sub> Adams said, made possible this dreadful split between life and art.

This tendency toward synthesis is in line with the artistic habit of mind, is in keeping with the thrust of seeking to develop a coherent and unified theory of arts and humanities for the public schools, and fits well the notion of making the arts more integral to society. Further, the spirit of the search for a theory as perceived in this study is one of pulling parts together, rather than separating them out; it aims at integration and wholeness, not atomism and fragmentation. Obviously, both separating and merging are important

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<sup>1</sup>Barbara L. Jackson, "A Re-Definition of Black Folk: Implications for Education," paper presented at the W.E.B. Dubois Institute for the Study of the American Black, Atlanta University, 4 October 1974.

<sup>2</sup>Leroi Jones, Blues People (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1963), p. 29.

concepts and necessary functions in the affairs of men. Yet the motivating assumption behind this study is that in American society there is a dangerous imbalance between the analyzing and synthesizing imperatives, weighted in favor of the former.

Perhaps the humanities offer an even better chance to build a case for a black perspective. A black perspective is, after all, not incompatible with what appears to be "mainstream" humanist thought as reflected by the writers and their ideas cited elsewhere in this study. Nor is it out of line with the spirit of most of the positions taken by the ASCD. Humanism from its very inception, and the humanities, when not prostituted to other causes, have always been committed to justice, good human relations and recently to a decent respect for ethnicity. Also, the subject matter of the humanities is not so idealistic as not to understand that economic and educational opportunities go on the scales of justice just as do ethics, morals, and treating other people with dignity. But while a black perspective--is not in significant disagreement with humanist ideals, it is not rooted in "humanism," did not grow from "humanistic" thought. Having had its inception in and having grown from other soil, it is free and unhampered; not fettered to or dragged down by the dogma of a developed and "established" body of knowledge. Hence, a black perspective--with insights not unlike humanists, yet not historically tied to humanism as such, and with no dogmatic line to follow--has the possibility of arriving at fresh, and devastatingly accurate observations on social phenomena.

Finally, a black perspective is recommended because it challenges and encourages those in society who are victimized by another's definition of them and their reality to define their own. It is unreasonable--at this

time--to expect those who have been advantaged by some one else's disadvantage to be unreservedly committed to relieving the "disadvantaged" of their condition. A black perspective would not let it be forgotten that an important part of the reason why minorities, including--blacks, women and artists--are defined and treated as they are, is for the profit and satisfaction of those doing the defining, or for the system that serves those doing the defining. Gary T. Marx explains how all whites profit from racism that is interwoven into the social system.

In this subtle sense (that racism is institutionalized) any white growing up in American culture cannot escape a degree of racism or avoid profiting economically and psychologically from a society stratified by<sup>1</sup> color, despite the vast difference in individuals and institutions.

But understanding some of the economic and psychological reasons for the old definitions does not relieve one of the challenges, mentioned earlier--or indeed of the obligation--to redefine his own reality in a positive and self advantageous way. This is the major work left to be done by those who assume a black perspective or by those committed to the idea that each person should have the right to define himself and determine for himself what role he may best play to contribute to the good fortune of us all. Further, a black perspective built into a theory for the arts and humanities would be an insightful and sobering check on a country that appears to need to boast more and more of being the most powerful and the most generous country in the world.

What is a black perspective? There is a temptation to ask what is the black perspective. Perhaps there is and has been a sufficient commonality of experience among black people to produce a shared outlook that could

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<sup>1</sup>Marx, p. 102.

be called "the black perspective." This study does not argue for or against the idea of such a monolithic view among such a vast number of people. Also in consideration of intellectual honesty and intellectual limits, the writer would be reluctant to take on the responsibility of defining anything with such finality and definitiveness as the word "the" suggest. Hence, what is a black perspective will be deemed sufficient for this study.

Once when asked to define "black aesthetic," Hoyt Fuller, editor of the Black World Magazine shot back to his questioner, "You know what 'aesthetic' means don't you? Well put 'black' in front of it."<sup>1</sup> This definition will not be as pithy as Fuller's. It will start with a dictionary definition of "perspective." Webster defines perspective as, "the interrelation in which parts of a subject are mentally viewed; the aspect of an object of thought from a particular standpoint; as historical perspective." A reasonable paraphrase of this definition is that a perspective is a particular vantage point from which phenomena are viewed. The word "interrelation" tends to suggest that the viewer may be intimately involved in the process of phenomena he is observing. A black perspective is the view of one who is or has been a participant, but most often in the role of other or victim. Forged from a love/hate relationship with the American society, a black perspective may be compounded of positive and negative feelings and thoughts about what it sees. In keeping with its African heritage and in line with the tradition and habit of mind of the artist, it does not make a sharp distinction between thinking and feeling. Also, like the artist, it makes no claim to scientific objectivity or apologizes for its lack of objectivity. Dubois saw in the black perspective "a double consciousness . . . two souls, two thoughts

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<sup>1</sup>Hoyt Fuller, "The Black Aesthetic," lecture given at the Conference of African American Studies, Atlanta, November 1970.

two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body."<sup>1</sup> Thus, a black perspective is complex. It is not a view of total condemnation of American society, nor is it a totally approving view. As a definition of it is attempted in this study, a black perspective would not feel comfortable saying, "my country right or wrong," or "America love it or leave it." In the words of Mercer Cook defining negritude and its function, a black perspective is a way of seeing, thinking and feeling that would tend "to counter the centuries of brainwashing with stereotypes raining down from white lips accusing black folk of innate laziness, dishonesty, stupidity, savagery, and ugliness."<sup>2</sup> It would be an inculcator of pride in oneself and in one's heritage and a supporter of others who have been victimized by an endless and steady downpour of stereotypes. Owing to the black power rhetoric of the sixties that tended to have produced, or at best given widespread popularity to the term, a black perspective is perceived by some to be reverse racism or a counter development of hostility and stereotypes among blacks directed against whites. It is not so viewed by this writer. And such an interpretation from this study would indicate either a mis-reading or mis-writing.

A black perspective, then, is a view to foster emergence of those who have been victimized. It is paradoxically universal in its "particularness" and therefore has broader application than just for black people. In the case of blacks, it arises not so much from a study of books as it does from

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<sup>1</sup>Dubois, Souls of Black Folk, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Mercer Cook and Stephen E. Henderson, The Militant Black Writer in Africa and the United States (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), p. 12.

the bones and spirits of those who have stood at the bottom most point of the pit of humiliation and dehumanization.

Yet no person or group has an exclusive "patent" on a black perspective. Many speak from this point of view--blacks, whites, and others. It is reasonable to suppose that some may speak consistently from this point of view, others intermittently. Kenneth Clark in Pathos of Power speaks from a black perspective; Mercer Cook and Stephen Henderson in The Black Militant Writer; W.E.B. Dubois in Souls of Black Folk; Robert Blauner in "International Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt;" Thomas Jefferson in the "Constitution of the United States;" Eldridge Cleaver in Soul on Ice; Harold Taylor in Art and Intellect; William Ryan in Blaming the Victim; Leo Tolstoy in What is Art? and Barbara Jackson in "A Re-Definition of Black Folk." And Carl Schurz spoke from this study's view of black perspective when he said:

It is a matter of historical experience that nothing that is wrong in principle can be right in practice. People are apt to delude themselves on that point, but the ultimate result will always prove the truth of the maxim. A violation of equal rights can never serve to maintain institutions which are founded upon equal rights.<sup>1</sup>

A black perspective as a definition has been attempted here is not hateful; nor is it lusting for revenge for real or perceived wrongs. It seeks a closer congruence between principle and practice in American society and moves toward a common ground of humanity everywhere.

In sum, on the way to a theory of arts and humanities for public education, the race problem must not be ignored, or approached from the wrong perspective. For such a theory to be compatible with the nobler

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<sup>1</sup>Howard Fast, The Last Frontier (New York: Bantam Book, Inc., 1941), p. Title Page.



thoughts of Jefferson, those in the Declaration of Independence, it must ironically eschew other thoughts of Jefferson. It must reject his morally irresponsible suggestion that this problem can not be resolved. In the interest of sane human/race relations, a black perspective has much to recommend it. It is a humanly worthy view for our times. It points us in a positive life oriented direction. Theories of government, law, economics or of arts and humanities for public education are not worth developing if their ultimate aim is not humankind's sharing of our allotted space and time in dignity and in justice. The 1969 moon landings, the 1976 Viking I and II Mar's probes and all other space exploration indicate that for now and in the foreseeable future, the space-ship earth is all we have. Old theories that pit one race or group against another, that explicate a rationale for one race's dominance and exploitation of another, or that seek blatantly or subtlety to perpetuate such a human or inhumane arrangement are death oriented and have no choice but to become increasingly discredited and dysfunctional in a learning society and a shrinking world of people still motivated by dreams of freedom, justice, and peace.

## **PART II. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY

#### RE-STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This dissertation set out to approach a theory of the arts and humanities for public education and to suggest an orientation to that end. Additionally, it promised to mention some possible ways to approach the implementation of the envisioned program. In the process of development, it was to point out the broader social implications of the kind of theory and program to which it is directed.

The first purpose was achieved by reviewing major concepts, issues and trends germane and to the topic under investigation (Chapter II) and by defining the arts and humanities so that they may be conceived of as a combined and coherent program for the public schools. To the end of the latter purpose, the distinctions and similarities of the arts and humanities have been discussed throughout the study, with particular stress in Chapter III. To determine and understand the present and relative status of the arts and humanities and how and why they have been defined out of the center of the practical affairs of people and relegated to the nether land of unimportance, luxury and fun, consideration was given to their economic and political aspects in Chapters IV and V. Inherent problems and values in the arts and humanities were explored in Chapter VI. This was done to

get an even sharper focus on the arts and humanities, to better understand the problems to be encountered in thinking toward a theory and to see what "place" the arts and humanities could fill in our public schools and in our private and public lives.

To clarify an orientation deemed important for the envisioned theory, a defined black perspective and a forthright coming to grips with the race problem in the United States were advocated in Chapter VII. This was approached with caution, recognizing that some problems are better left alone. Also, it is a recognized truism that people can solve and resolve a problem without ever naming the problem or confronting it directly. However, a black perspective was suggested and clarified, especially in consideration of the race question--which is considered of great moment to this study--because a black perspective is seen as a life-directed, earth-sharing view; and because the question of race seemed submerged, gingerly, sometimes obliquely and superficially treated in the literature.

A second objective of this study was to mention some possible approaches to the implementation of a program that could grow from the theory pursued. This will appear later in this chapter under "Recommendations."

Finally, the dissertation aimed to take note of the interconnection of the public school and the larger society. It was thus at pains throughout to point out the broader social implications of the kind of theory to which this research was directed. In this way, it fulfilled its third major purpose. Further implications will be found in this chapter.

Taken together then, these conceptualizations may be seen as achieving the purposes set for this study. The concepts considered moved toward a coherent theory and constitute at least a part of a theoretical base from which a theory of arts and humanities for public schools could grow. Specifically, the conceptionalizing activities engaged in to achieve this study's purposes have involved:

Defining the arts and humanities from several points of view--separately and together, via their sub categories, economically and politically, in terms of their social functions and significance, and in terms of their inherent problems and values

Reviewing pertinent trends, issues and concepts which impinge upon or appear to offer directions to a sound theory

Selecting, analyzing and synthesizing certain ideas that are in the purview of education, the arts and the humanities

Clarifying and suggesting an orientation for a theory

Considering possible approaches for the implementation of an envisioned program.

These ways of thinking led to the seven postulates stated in Chapter

VI--that the arts and humanities:

Suffer from a confusion of terms

Are not organized for maximum impact in society

Are almost non-existent as organized, viable entities in most public schools and have very little influence in American society

Are seen by the corporate and political elite as threatening to its interests

Have inherent and unique qualities that impede their social acceptance.

Have unique and intrinsic values important (if not essential) to a civilized society

Have participated in fostering and perpetuating their own impotency.

The activities engaged in in this research were carried out with certain stated and implied assumptions about people and their relationships, schools and their purposes, and a democratic society and its ideals.

### Implications

Implied in this work, if not directly stated, is the notion that there is an area in American life that is not being properly cultivated. This lack of cultivation or exploration is partially the results of our being conditioned to demand "hard scientific data" to initiate and test innovations. We are impatient with what cannot be "proved." Yet such a requirement would have cancelled the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Public education and land grant colleges would never have gone past the planning stage. It is also implied that potential energies for social good go wanting-- again partly because we think that "we can't miss what we can't measure." But these artistic/humanistic tendencies, which do not readily lend themselves to measurement, although they exist in every man, have been wasted also because they have been siphoned off and channelled into the amusement of the socially elite. This inference would seem to be a prime reason why the arts and humanities should have a central place in the public school curriculum. For if they are so valued by the elite (an elite which may or may not have an appreciation for what artists are really about ) that they seek to control and to keep them for their exclusive enjoyment, they must be of great worth. There is an elitest view extant that the arts are too good, too "fine" for common people. Yet there is no reason to assume that a greater proportion of people among the elite are capable of appreciating the arts and of learning through them than exists among the wider population.

It is the rational, if not the empirical, position of this study that the arts and the humanities are sources of ennoblement, enlightenment, and of intellectual and emotional growth to people generally. Thus the arts are important to the public school curriculum because the public schools are concerned with educating people from all social strata, a function that includes finding the "natural aristocracy," no matter where it is.

Another inference to be drawn from this work is the contention of a need for an artistic/humanistic thrust to counter-balance the scientific/technological. Akin to this and in the interest of human and social contentment (some think in the interest of human survival), there is also the need for keeping a decent tension between change and stability. The arts, symbolizing change (imagining, exploring the cutting edge, creating) and the humanities, symbolizing stability (harking to our cultural heritage, reminding us of our universality or oneness and of our unbroken human adventure) afford us a good opportunity to learn how to better balance change and stability. This, of course, has vast implications for educational administrators who are simultaneously stimulators of change and protectors of stability. They know that too much of either can mean lack of success or even death for an organization. This study, especially in its advocacy of the arts in public schools, offers a good opportunity for those educational administrators interested in exploring the educational potential of the affective domain--the spiritual/emotional intellectual matrix. This area that may be defined as the preserve of inner feelings and intuition, the wellspring of creativity, the engine of enthusiasm, the motor of intrinsic motivation, and the source of intense joy and unspeakable agony.

This, the affective domain, is the first "workshop" of all artists. And this study, compatible with artistic views would teach educators and educational administrators that the affective domain is the best route to genuine personal discipline, and to divergent thinking and cognitive learning. This work, however, will not go as far as Bernard Shaw, who said, "I am simply calling your attention to the fact that art is the only teacher except torture."<sup>1</sup> But it offers the chance to make schools more interesting and vital places.

Also, this dissertation has important implications for those educational leaders who see the need for moral/ethical education. The humanities represent a virtually untapped storehouse of insights on solutions to human problems. Literature, philosophy, theology, and history--and more recently ecology taught as a humanities subject--would be well used if studied and taught as ways of coming to grips with long standing and recently perceived human problems. Social science theory and practice have their place in the solution of human problems. However, as the word science suggests, they remain tied to the scientific model and mind set. Also the voluminous research findings of social scientists are only of statistically measurable things, are often not applied, and sometimes wrongly applied to the solution of human problems. This is what W. E. B. Dubois learned, much to his disillusionment, after diligently compiling his monumental study The Philadelphia Negro. Kenneth Clark, in his most recent book Pathos of Power concludes that man's betterment comes down to the fostering of empathy, compassion, kindness, and humor.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Read, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Clark, Foreword, p. xiii.



Indeed it may be said with considerable validity that this study has implications for the entire formal educational establishment. It has implications for: the activities, the uses and the abuses of research; for teacher training programs and for practicing teachers, for student and practicing administrators, for state departments and boards of education, for curriculum supervisors and consultants, for power sources in communities, for schools of art, and for humanities departments at universities.

And finally of no small moment are the implications that this study has for those who would think seriously, realistically, and constructively about the complex of issues around "man's most dangerous myth," the concept of race. The depth, breath, complexity, and volatility of the race issue make it all the more important that theories on any aspect of man's earthly existence take this "myth" into account and that reasonable men face it squarely and with a different point of view in the future than has been the case in the past.

### Recommendations

The dissertation in its entirety is, of course, a recommendation that the arts and humanities be organized and established in the public schools, giving them equal status with other curricular offerings. Also, there are implied recommendations in the immediately preceding chapter:

- (1) That arts and humanities be instituted as a counter balance to the scientific mind set
- (2) That an arts and humanities curriculum be considered as proper content for a curriculum of affect, which could enhance cognitive learning
- (3) And that the humanities, in particular be studied as a rich source of insight into the solutions of human problems.

The following recommendations are suggestions as to how a program growing out of the envisioned theory may be initiated or approached in a school system. These suggestions are predicated on the idea that a theory need not be complete and neat before one considers programs that may flow from it. Scientists and artists alike tend to agree there is no such thing even as an immutable fact. How much less likely then is there an immutable, closed, and complete theory and how utterly foolish to insist on one. The arts and the humanities teach us that people must often move forward on the bases of the sketchiest directions and on the vaguest notions of what the movement portends.

One of the first considerations in thinking about a program is its feasibility in terms of funding and local resources of talent and expertise. The generation of these is recommended if they do not appear to be readily available. A second consideration should be the ethnicity of the community where the program is to be initiated. There should be enough diversification built in to accommodate various publics. Third, much thought should be given to educating the community to a broader concept of the arts and humanities. Fourth, timeliness should be considered. There is a time to push for such a program and time when energy would be better used planning, than pushing. Also, the school system that undertakes a coordinated program as suggested here should establish a good working relationship with local businesses and institutions of higher learning and with local, state, and national arts and humanities organizations. This assures help in developing materials, conducting workshops, and in identifying and training personnel. This is also a way to enlist the support of important groups that could, by apathy or action, undermine the program at its inception.

A final recommendation is that great care be taken to select the right people to carry out the program. The best people would not be just good artists, committed humanists, and effective teachers--but in addition to having a high

degree of these characteristics--they must hold a point of view concerning the arts and humanities commensurate with ideas expressed in this dissertation. Those who view the arts as frills or the humanities as pursuits for "do gooders" or academic intellectuals should be oriented to a different view or screened out. However, those who hold elitist views of "arts for art's sake" may be used (but with reservations) for their devotion and adherence to discipline, craft, excellence, and high standards.

This comprehensive effort in the arts and humanities is for all students, from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. The goal would be to have the arts and humanities perceived as--and in fact, be--an integral part of the curriculum, treated as a content area with the same value, worth, status, and educational responsibility as other content areas. Eventually also the essence, the outlook and the attitude of the artist and the humanist would become a widely accepted, if not dominant ethos infused in people as authentic ways of knowing, organizing, and coping with themselves, other selves, social systems and with the ecological system in all their complex, ever evolving dimensions, and inextricable interrelatedness.

In addition to being comprehensive in scope and academically rigorous and prestigious (the potential for academic rigor and prestige is certainly there) an arts and humanities program would carry an aura similar to that of a good physical education program. Like the physical education program, it would in attitude and structure, be geared to the discovery, development, and display of talent. While those less talented in the performance of some arts and humanities activities would be knowledgeable appreciators, spectators, and critics of those who perform. Thus, everyone would benefit from the inherent

and generated benefits of the arts and humanities. A well conceived, thoughtfully undertaken arts and humanities program, backed by an enlightened and committed school board and superintendent could offer both the intellectual rigor of a tough academic program and the excitement and emotional involvement and release of a good sports program.

### Sketched Possible Approaches to Organizing an Arts and Humanities Program

Organizing the arts and humanities program in the public schools is a multi-faceted problem--involving educating the public, a political strategy, an understanding of school finance, and recruitment of trained personnel. Obviously this is a major undertaking involving a number of knowledgeable and committed people. A planning committee is recommended and described later in this study. However, the implementing and administering of the program would ideally be the responsibility of a competent administrator at the district office level. Such a person must be well grounded in one of the arts or in one area of the humanities with a profound understanding of their place in the psyche of each person and in the collective culture and society of men. The supervisor must understand and appreciate each area--its potentials and limitations--as well as the interrelations of all the areas. Being so steeped in and obsessed by his own area of interest--as is frequently the case with artists--should not predispose him to view other artistic/humanistic pursuits as less important. Beyond these considerations, there is the question of how the program may be put into the school system. Five ideas will be sketched which may be used as approaches to models for organizing the arts and humanities in the public schools.

### Integration Into Regular Curriculum

The plan that would appear the easiest to put into effect--though this could prove deceiving--would be to enrich the present curriculum with arts and humanities courses. These courses--some required, and others to be elected--would be given status comparable to others in the curriculum. Although these courses would be scheduled throughout the school plant on the basis of available space, it would be important that they be listed and thought of as being under the Department of Arts and Humanities. Perhaps this is a reasonable first step when others are not feasible. History and literature would go under the arts and humanities umbrella, as well as all existing arts' activities.

### Separate Wing

This idea is based on the physical education model, which usually has its own block of space--the gymnasium and adjoining locker rooms, offices, etc. The Arts and Humanities Department could have a similar block of space, with a small theatre, dance studios, photography dark room, and an area for painting and sculpture, etc. An advantage of this plan would appear to be that it would generate an atmosphere conducive to the study of the arts and humanities.

### Separate School Plan

This plan would be a more extreme version of the Separate Wing idea, with the arts and humanities school being physically separated from the regular school plant. It could be similar to vocational and technical

schools which serve one or more school districts. It would offer the advantage of more flexible scheduling to meet the more unstructured needs of the arts.

### Apprentice System

Using this plan, students would be afforded the opportunity of working with community arts agencies and practicing professional artists for credit. Humanities courses could be taken at the school plant. An attribute of this plan is that it forces school and community cooperation and validates the idea that education does occur in many places.

### Programs in Existing Facilities

This plan speaks mainly to the problem of where arts and humanities activities could take place. It envisions the use of city auditoriums which stand unused much of the time, and little theatres which in many instances serve as playthings for the elite. This would also include paired partnership arrangements with other existing cultural resources which would be treated as centers for the public schools' arts and humanities program.

These sketched plans could serve as general ways of thinking about organizing an arts and humanities program in the public schools. However, an effective program for a particular school system must be tailored to meet the unique needs of the system. It should be further tailored or left loose enough to meet the special community needs at the building level.

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It is recommended that one be leery of crash programs with easy funds, even if such are available. The kinds of program envisioned here could

not be implemented superficially, as an educational bandage or as a way of obtaining funds that possibly could be attracted at special times--as for example during the 1976 Bicentennial celebration with emphasis on our cultural heritage. This is not to suggest that such an opportunity for funds should be disregarded. Certainly the old adage of "striking the iron while it's hot" has its place. However, such funds, if obtained, should be used with the sober understanding that they constitute "seed money," and that building a good arts and humanities program--one that is not "a flash in the pan"--requires long, hard work.

Given the unlikely possibility of the emergence of a charismatic community leader who could inspire the right people to act to overcome institutional resistance (both bureaucratic and traditional) and put the organizational pieces together, the best alternative would seem to be a group of knowledgeable people working laboriously and conscientiously.

Thus, at least a year of planning by a special committee is recommended. This committee would be charged with: (1) assessing and justifying the need for such a curriculum innovation as suggested here, (2) hammering out a reasonable approach to this curriculum innovation in the context of the problems and potentials of the school district, and (3) helping to decide what preparation and training of personnel, etc., would be required to build such a program. The committee could consist of ten (10) people--two leaders, a curriculum expert, and an educational administrator at the central office level; three teachers, two students, and three community people--one from the legitimate, local arts agency, one from the humanities department of the local or nearest college or university. The work of this hypothetical committee is further spelled out by the following illustrative example of a program budget.

TABLE 5

Program Budget for the Arts and Humanities  
Planning and Implementing Committee

## I. Objectives

- A. Design a feasible, viable, coordinated arts and humanities curriculum for all students for K-12.
- B. Consider and delineate possible approaches to the initiation and implementation of the arts and humanities curriculum.
- C. Select, recommend, and justify one of the several approaches described.

- II. Services--The committee will be involved in intensive, substantive, reality-based, goal-oriented discussions and decision making in regard to curriculum content in keeping with the unique history and needs of the particular community and with the stated objectives.

RESOURCES OR "INPUT"			EVALUATION OR "OUTPUT"
Direct Cost Only		Direct Costs, One Year	
Leaders' Compensation	2	\$2,000	Evaluation would be based on how well the committee achieves its objectives of meeting the curriculum needs of all students in the opinions of the superintendent and the board of education.
Teachers' Compensation	3	750	
Students' Compensation	2	500	
Community People's Compensation	3	750	
Resource books and other supplies and materials		300	
Part-time secretarial help	1	300	

## Comments:

Teachers' and community members' compensations are computed at \$50.00 a person per meeting for five meetings.



The idea is to start modestly, build slowly, adjust constantly, so that the program would develop in the best possible way for the various constituencies of the school district. At its maturity, which could take approximately six years or more, the program would be a smooth-running coordinated effort of instruction and participation in the arts and humanities. The humanities component, posing questions of human values for now and later would use as its content the inexhaustible and timeless studies in the humanities. The prime method could be that of Telic Imaging. This is a method of study requiring the student to construct a future self toward which to work, using combinations of ideas and models from arts and humanities. Developed by Dr. Maxwell Goldberg, Telic Imaging is both a method of teaching and a personally satisfying, socially useful way of making sense out of the substantive matter of Literature, Philosophy, Ethics, etc. It is a rational, self-determined way of growing.<sup>1</sup>

The orientation of the program would not only help students see both the arts and the humanities as the primary source of timeworn human values; but students would also begin to see them as providing a point of view, a way of life for profit and practical use, for personal fulfillment and for social good. But more important the program's orientation would help students see how the insights gained would be applicable to human and ecological problems besetting our community and our world now.

The arts component would consist of classes for credit in several areas: (1) Drama--acting, stagecraft, directing, and play writing and critiquing;

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<sup>1</sup>Maxwell Goldberg, Design in Liberal Learning (Washington: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1971), pp. 45-49.

(2) Music--choral, instrumental, American classical, and jazz; (3) Photography--from the selection and composition of a subject to dark room development and framing; (4) Dance--ballet, modern and creative; (5) Architecture--conceptualization design and model building; (6) Creative writing--theory and technique in poetry, short stories and the essay. These would be in addition to, and ultimately would be coordinated with, the usual systemwide program of arts and crafts that already exist in most schools.

Taken together the arts component (drama, music, photography, dance, architecture, creative writing, and arts and crafts) could be thought of as providing human values through the "practicing humanities." They would afford experience in human values through a high degree of involved participation (creating, forming, shaping) requiring discipline, thought, feeling, and imagination.

The other (humanities) component could consist of classes in materials drawn from Literature, History, Philosophy, Theology, and Ethics--areas of thought that seek, each in its own way, to understand, to explain and to suggest proper relationships between a man and himself, between man and his fellow men and between man and his universe. Surely, we could not go far wrong toward the end of a more humanly satisfying future than by focusing the minds of today's youth on such areas of thought brought together in a unified and coherent way. These could be considered as the "studious humanities" and would form a proper context or frame for thinking about the practicing humanities (the arts) as important pursuits that should be more central (and recognized as such) to the affairs of man.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

A major assumption underlying the development of this dissertation has been that a socially beneficial practice of the arts and humanities must be preceded by a sound theory. Another assumption has been that the public schools are a good place for implanting artistic/humanistic inputs which would ultimately have the desired positive social influence. A third assumption has been that the artistic/humanistic perspective has, for social purposes, been rendered ineffective.

In line with these assumptions, the first part of the study moved toward the development of a theoretical concept of the arts and humanities by defining them in such a way that they would be a vital part of a school curriculum and ultimately of society. This involved making distinctions and connections between the arts and the humanities and between the various levels of each. Consideration was given to how the arts and humanities fit into the economic and political life of American society. The reasons for their curtailment in these areas were underscored. Inherent problems and values in the arts and humanities were explored. And seven postulates or "truths" evolving from this train of thought were set forth. These postulates were tendered as a distillation of this thinking about the arts and humanities for the purpose of organizing and implementing them in the public schools.

In Chapter VIII the race issue and a black perspective were linked and discussed. This was prompted by, among other considerations, a concern that a theory leading from this study could amount to putting "old wine in new bottles." Also, it was noted that the problem of race was gingerly and superficially treated in the literature.

Part two of the dissertation was concerned with suggestions for organizing and implementing the arts and humanities in the public schools. Several approaches were mentioned.

The ultimate result envisioned for an arts and humanities program would be that the community in question would become a richer and more satisfying environment culturally, socially, intellectually, and emotionally. It would be more satisfying culturally because more people would have acquired a deeper appreciation for beauty, a more discriminating taste for excellence, a demeanor indicative of genuine dignity and compassion through expert care and aesthetic training focused on the development of one's "finer" faculties. It would be more intellectually stimulating because the views of artists and humanists and others with this orientation would be accepted or rejected on their merit, not suppressed. Also, there would be more vital people in the environment who could engage in provocative learning-laden dialogues and thus make worthy contributions to the pool of ideas. Casual and formal discussions would be more worthwhile. And it would be more satisfying socially because more people would have developed not just polite tolerance, but a real appreciation for, and an understanding of, the social function and essentiality of difference. More people would have an appreciation for their own cultural heritage and its attendant values, as well as a knowledge, appreciation and respect for another's heritage

and its values. They would gain these benefits by having been exposed to a curriculum that: (1) stressed the value of diversity and the principles, practice, and the urgency of creative cooperation in a pluralistic society, and (2) revealed the underlying structure of our human commonality and oneness. The environment would be more satisfying emotionally because more people would feel a sense of self worth; a sense of rapport, warmth, acceptance, and oneness with themselves, with others, and with their environment. More people would feel a sense of fulfillment that comes mainly from being a part of, participating in, and contributing positively to one's environment and gaining the respect and approval of one's fellow human beings.

The program would be based on the age-old truth that people need more than bread to live fully and on the apparently obvious insight that people need training in the art of creative cooperation in the interest of maintaining a modicum of social harmony and human dignity, maybe even in the interest of human survival itself. A thoroughgoing arts and humanities program in the public schools would go a long way toward resolving the race question in American education and society. Also, it is assumed that such a program would address the need of the building up of inner resources (interests, competencies, and values) that would serve as a shield against alienation and loneliness as one grows older and approaches death.

Concomitant with this, and even directly in many ways, the program would be addressing problems of crime and drugs--problems which studies have shown are often rooted in boredom among young people in and out of school. People need involvement in something that grows out of themselves, that challenges their minds and imaginations, incites constructive thought,

utilizes and directs their fantasies, points their physical and emotional drives to ultimately positive ends, requires the most exquisite discipline, and affords opportunities for the discovery, development, and effective display of their latent talents. Finally, instituting a coordinated arts and humanities program for the public schools is consistent with the democratic ideal of providing a maximum number of chances for as many as possible; and it is totally in keeping with the need for a richer and more vital school environment. Finally, such a program would represent a serious effort by public education to keep its contradictory commitments to equality of opportunity and to individual differences at the same time.

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## Vita

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1952-54	United States Army	Honorably Discharged February, 1954
1954-58	Agricultural and Technical College, Greensboro, North Carolina	B.S. August, 1958
1958-69	Junior and Senior High School English Teacher, District Seven Schools, Spartanburg, South Carolina	
	Graduate Student and NDEA Fellow, South Carolina State College, 1961 and 1965	
	L.D.P. and Star Teacher of the Year Awards, 1969	
1969-70	Ford Foundation Leadership Development Program Fellow	
	Administrative Internship, Department of African Studies, Howard University, Washington	
	Graduate Student, School of Education, Harvard University	
	Short Story published in Literary Anthology of Fiction, Sponsored by the South Carolina Tricentennial Commission, 1970.	
1970-71	High School English Teacher, District Seven Schools, Spartanburg, South Carolina	
1971-73	Director, Model Cities Cultural Arts Program, Spartanburg, South Carolina	
	Participant, Arts Administration Institute, Harvard University, Summer, 1971	
1973-75	Ford Fellow in Doctoral Program, Educational Administration, Atlanta University	
	M.A. in Education	
	Candidate for Ed.D. in Educational Administration	
1975	Principal, Mary H. Wright Elementary School, Spartanburg, South Carolina	
1976	Ed.D. in Educational Administration, December	